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ENGLISH PROSE

GLISH PROSE

ITS

ELEMENTS, HISTORY, AND USAGE

BY

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PREFACE

ENGLISH PROSE is the greatest instrument of communication hat is now in use among men upon the earth. On this ound alone if on no other it would seem to be worthy of t enquiry which is suggested by the natural curiosity for owledge. Yet it is a thing to be noted, that whereas our etry has called forth a succession of critical literature from e times of Elizabeth until now, no like attention has been aid to English Prose.

The present work is quite new, not merely in details and in treatment, but in its very conception. All previous works pon English Prose, so far as I am acquainted with them, have usied themselves solely with the rhetorical graces of composition. I have therefore thought it the less necessary to xpatiate much upon these, and I have tried rather to lay down he foundation and to exhibit the substantial fabric upon which the ornamental part may be displayed. For it is precisely in the figurative and ornamental part that method and doctrine can do least; what they can do best, is to provide the elementary framework for the reception and the setting of such ornaments of diction as flow from the wealth of the writer's own mind.

Mr. Herbert Spencer has observed that 'the maxims contained in works on composition and rhetoric, are presented in an unorganized form.' He has certainly made himself quite secure from any retort of this animadversion. The

most consecutive, organized, systematic writing that it ever been my good fortune to read in connexion with subjects handled in this treatise, is Mr. Herbert Spenc essay entitled, 'The Philosophy of Style.' In that remarka argument he has aimed at evolving the whole structure literary Diction out of the germ of a single maxim. He h certainly succeeded in gathering up a large number scattered phenomena under one leading idea. It is an admi able and a masterly production, but it is not and cannot b exempt from that *à priori* taint, which conveys into th reader's mind a doubt whether it is possible that all th multitudinous varieties of diction can be regimented into a array of such imposing simplicity.

I have had both pleasure and profit from the peru of Mr. Herbert Spencer's Essay, but I have not adopted h method. The kind of system which I have aimed at rather the system of exposition than that of philosophy. have sought to collect and group the most elementary an fundamental data. This is a humbler task, but one tha demands more space and perhaps requires more patience. I is not attended with many recurrent satisfactions of triumpl ant congruities. It does not promise a simple and perfec solution of all antinomies and contradictions. But it wi be found to meet and welcome in a remarkable way some (the inferences which the philosopher arrived at by quite different approach. And I hope it may work in the sam direction by tending to convince educators that the culture (English diction is wanted as a means of attaining improve habits of thought, and that for this culture something deepe is required than the effort of superficial imitation.

I can imagine that, at the sight of my title, many, an those not inexperienced in literature, might be prompted t ask What there can be to say about English prose? The onl practical answer to such a query would be, Try! Any or

who did try by putting down what he thought to the point, would soon find that he had something to add, and, like John Bunyan, would feel drawn on by his subject to add more and more. This has been my experience, and something like this is the history of the present book. No one can know its incompleteness as I do. But a book may be useful without being complete.

Imperfection might however be charged upon grounds which I should not admit. It might seem that a Treatise upon English Prose ought to marshal the chief writers with purpose to illustrate the degrees of their merit;—whereas in the present work if this has been done in a measure with the leading names of the past, little or no attempt has been made to determine the relative excellences of contemporary writers. My answer would be that waiting upon the natural unfolding of my subject and led on by it, I have caught examples from books I happened to be reading, which same had often ministered the thought or observation I wanted to illustrate. Aiming at a systematic treatment of my theme, I have not assumed that the ranking of modern authors was in my province. I leave that for those who feel themselves equal to it. At the same time I am almost bound to add that I do marvel at myself when I see by the Index how little I have drawn from masters of high discourse for whom my admiration is most complete—such as that sacred orator, whose recent departure, so unexpected, solemnizes the time in which I write.

In a book of this nature the contents are of less moment than their arrangement. If the arrangement be good, the additional observations of every intelligent reader and writer will have a whereabouts to register and bestow them. At any rate, this has been the prevalent feeling with me in the making of this book as it was in my 'Land Charters.' The years that I had groped and groped in our early documents

compelled me to the long labour of that little book, wherein if I am accused of having omitted something, I little reck, because, in that as in this, the framework itself tells the student where is the proper place to instal whatever he can add to fill in the outline.

The general plan of the present work may be briefly described. First, there are four Chapters in which the subject is treated analytically; then five Chapters in which the treatment is synthetic, and progressively so, from divided aspects of Diction in Chapters V. and VI., down to the comprehensive effect of Style in Chapter IX. Thus far it might be called two Books, analytic and synthetic. A third Book traces the historical career of English Prose, following the three great Eras of its development, whence this Book naturally falls into three Chapters, X., XI., and XII. To these three Books are appended a closing chapter of observations calculated to promote the culture and practice of what has been called the Art of the Nineteenth Century.

The retired tradesman in the play, when he began to be fired with literary ambition, discovered with surprize and delight that he had been unwittingly talking prose all his life. Something of the same kind has happened with us, only we can hardly be said as yet to have discovered how long we have been writing prose. That admirable critic, Mr. Matthew Arnold, was imperfectly informed in this particular. Being under the impression that English prose was a development of recent centuries, and that it was younger than French prose, he put this idea forth with all the skill of exposition wherein he was so great a master. He has thus given form and shape to an error which had previously existed in vague apprehension only. Against the assertions of such an authority nothing short of reason and demonstration can or should prevail; and these I hope will be found adequately produced in the present volume.

In the career of Aryan prose which is now about 2,400 years old, four chief examples of prose diction have come up, and these have risen in the following chronological order, Greek, Latin, English, French. Two of these are original beyond the others, namely the Greek and the French. The Latin is the least original. The English has been influenced by the Latin and the French, but the secret of knowing English consists in discerning how much of original remains unaffected. Superstructure is more conspicuous than basis, and it is easier to see the effects of foreign influence than it is to recognize the stubborn rock of vernacular idiom. Even in classic Latin, where the Greek influence is conspicuous, there is a profound depth of originality which holds its own and which it is easy to overlook. Of these four examples two survive as the great living instruments of human thought and intercourse, the one being typical and European, the other comprehensive and cosmopolitan.

Much is spent by English people, and not without good reason, on elementary acquirements in the ancient languages of Greek and Latin, and on the modern languages especially French, German and Italian, but their life-long medium of communication is English, and the study of this is comparatively neglected. In defence of the present system it is urged that education must busy itself with that which could not be acquired at any other time, that English is learnt as a mother tongue before the age of artificial education, and again is cultivated by habitual use during the whole of after life; and further that the English language itself is indirectly benefited by the general study of other tongues. All this is more or less true, but then it should be admitted that all these educational studies are chiefly useful as ancillary to the larger knowledge and appreciation of our own tongue, and that to an Englishman the cultivation of English which is his instrument of thought, must be after all the most important and the most fruitful part of literary education.

Of debts to friends I have made acknowledgment in the course of the work; and if anywhere such a duty has been omitted, the omission is accidental. But now at the last moment I think of three whose help I would record before I close. Mr. Shadwell of Oriel College, and the Rev. Charles Plummer, Fellow of Corpus Christi College in Oxford (Senior Proctor this year)—these friends, besides specific help in places, have lent me that which gives perhaps its best pleasure to literary production, their countenance and sympathy and free communication of thought. In saying this however I shift off from myself no fraction of responsibility for what I have written. Without the aid of a third friend, Mr. H. N. Harvey, late of the Ordnance Survey Office at Southampton, I could never have put this book into condition for the press;—not only has he transcribed the whole, but much of it a second and even a third time, and this solely for the sake of old friendship. In this cooperation he has moreover given me many a corrective hint, and frequently brought examples to bear from the wide field of his own literary experience.

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ENGLISH PROSE

CHAPTER I

CHOICE OF EXPRESSION

Selection of vocabulary more important in English than in any other language —The bulk of the English vocabulary has been deposited in three successive strata, composed respectively of words from the three following sources: (1) Native English, (2) Norman French, (3) Classical Literature—The two former unite in representing the antiquity of the language, as against the third, which represents its modern accretions—For brief and convenient typical designations we may take the terms, (1) Saxon, (2) Romanic, (3) Latin —Significance of these terms—A threefold table—Examples and illustrations—Directions and cautions with reference to this table—Where the choice is not threefold it is often duplicate—A twofold table, Romanic and Latin—Further elements of choice: Compounds, Phrases, New Saxon— Continual utility of the doctrine of this chapter.

ONE of the first considerations for the writer who wishes to write English, is the selection of his vocabulary. This is more or less important in all literary languages, but in none is it nearly so great a matter as it is in English. For as our language has a very much larger stock of words than any other language that ever existed in the world, and as it keeps the bulk of this immense stock ever bright with use, it follows that word-choosing must have a peculiarly important place in the practice of English composition. In fact, the choice of words holds a larger place in writing English than it did in writing Greek or Latin, or even than it does in writing French or German. In all nations it is necessary for a writer to learn to appreciate the various colours and shades of words, but in our nation it is most necessary. It is not enough for

him to know the dictionary definition of a word, he must feel the difference there is between it and other words that might have a similar definition; he must perceive the effect it will have in each grouping of context; he must know its taste and savour. To write English well, a man must be completely in touch with the English vocabulary. And this is not to be gained at once; no course of discipline that can be prescribed will give it to him promptly; he gets it from experience of literature and of life: hearing, reading, writing.

If we give the first place to the Choice of words by reason of its elementary nature, we may find another good reason for this order of proceeding in the vastness of its compass. For though it be taken up first, it will be finished last, or rather will still remain unfinished. In every other requisite of good writing a man may have learned all that there is to learn, but in this he will always find something more to observe.

All that any treatise can do for him in this pervading element is to furnish him with such hints as may best quicken his own faculties of observation and discrimination. Of these the chief is this, to know the great chronological divisions of the vocabulary. For there are, broadly speaking, three main divisions of English words, corresponding to the great eras of our literary history. It is useful to be familiar with the distinction of these three periods, to which reference will repeatedly be made in the course of the present work. The first period is mainly of native English; the second mainly from that French inundation which was the sequel of the Norman Conquest; the third is mainly due to the educational diffusion of classical literature since the Revival of Letters and the Reformation. We may discriminate the three groups with sufficient nicety for practical purposes, by saying that for effect in composition, although the words of the first and second periods are ethnologically distinct, and retain each their several colour, yet the mere effect of distance throws these two groups very much together into one mass, as against the third division, which represents the modern time, beginning with the sixteenth century. Therefore, in the table of examples which is presently to follow, while a single

line separates the first group from the second, a double line shall run between the second and the third.

As it will be convenient to have short terms for these three strata, I will call them simply: (1) Saxon, (2) Romanic, (3) Latin.

I call the first 'Saxon,' in deference to that widely diffused expression by which native English is commonly known as 'Saxon English.'

I call the second 'Romanic,' because it is in bulk French, which is a language formed, not from book-Latin, but from the vernacular tradition of Latin, the living Latin of the Roman Empire, the proper name of which was Lingua Romana.

I call the third 'Latin,' because this term indicates the learned language, the language of Latin literature; and it is from this source in the main that our third column is furnished. Under this generic title are included the Greek words that have entered our language during the modern classical era, and some others of miscellaneous origin.

In these columns, a few antiquated or provincial words are distinguished: the antiquated by **thick** type, the words in provincial dialect by s p a c e d letters.

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
abide (intransitive)	continue remain	
abide (transitive)	endure	tolerate
adder snake	serpent	viper
ailing	—	valetudinarian
anger ire wrath	fury rage —	choler indignation passion resentment
ashes	cinders	cinerary incinerated

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
ask	enquire question	interrogate interrogation
ask asking	petition	supplicate
ask for	request	solicit
backer	supporter	
bait	allurement decoy enticement lure	temptation
beam	ray	radiant radiance radiate radiation
beat	scourge	flagellation
beat	outvie surpass	
befall	occur occurrence	incident incidental
begin	commence	incipient initiate
bequeathe	devise	disposition legacy testament testator
bereave	privation	deprive deprivation
bestow	place store up	deposit
betrothed	espoused espousals spouse	

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
bewail	lament	deplore
bewitch	enchant	fascinate
bewray	disclose inform	reveal
bid	offer proffer proposal	propose proposition
binding ought must	duty	oblige obligation obligatory
birth	nobility	aristocracy
blessing	benison	benediction
bloody	murderous	sanguinary
blue	azure	cerulean
body	carcase corpse	cadaverous
body	company	corporation
body	substance	solidity
bold daring	brave hardy stout sturdy valiant	resolute
boldness	courage	fortitude
boldness	sturdiness	resolution resolve
bold shameless staring	impudent	audacious

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
boldness	impudence	audacity
bony	—	osseous
booty	prey spoil	pillage plunder
bore (verb)	pierce	perforate
bore (noun)	tunnel	calibre perforation
bough	branch	ramification
bow	archer archery	toxophilite
bow	obeisance	inclination salaam salutation
breach	fracture	chasm disruption
breach	infringement	infraction violation
breach	estrangement quarrel	difference dissension rupture schism
break-up	—	vacation
break-up	dismemberment	dissolution
breathe	exhale inhale	respiration
breed	engender	propagate
bright	luminous	incandescent

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
bright	brilliant	effulgent resplendent
bright	clear	translucent transparent
bright	cheerful	animated vivacious
brimstone	—	sulphur
brink	verge	margin
build builder building	architect	architecture architectural
bulk	size	magnitude
burdensome	oppressive	onerous
burly	huge	corpulent
busy	engaged	active occupied
buxom	jolly	
buy	purchase	
care	anxiety	solicitude
care	attention caution concern regard	
careful	anxious	solicitous
chide	blame reprove	animadversion reprehensible
choice	preference	predilection
choose	prefer	elect select

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
christening	—	baptism
clog	—	impede
clothe	array cover dress garment robe	
clothe	endue	invest investiture
cold	indifferent	apathetic apathy
cold-hearted	callous	insensible
craft	art	ingenuity
craft	subtilty trick	artifice
crooked	perverse	indirect depravity tortuous
dale	valley	
dark	reserve	reticence
deal	part	quantity
dealing	traffic	negotiation
dear	precious	valuable
deem	surmise	apprehend
die	expire	moribund
dole	largess	donative
doom	judgment sentence	

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
doorkeeper	porter	janitor
downfall	destruction	demolition
draw	allure	attract
draw	—	elicit extract
dread	dismay	consternation panic
dregs	lees	sediment
drink	beverage potion	potation
drive	press push	urge propel
dry	parched	arid aridity
dull (intellectually)	stupid	obtuse
dull (morally)	insensible	callous impervious
dwell	delay pause	hesitate
dwell	reside	inhabit
dwelling	residence	domicile habitation
dwindle	waste	attenuate
earn	deserve	merit
earnings	wages	remuneration
elf	fairy	

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
empty	void	inane inanity vacant vacuity vacuum
empty	void	uninhabited unoccupied
empty	vain	futile
end	close conclusion	termination
enough	suffice	sufficient
fair	beautiful	
fair	clear	pure
fair	favourable prosperous	
fair	gentle	
fair	candid equal honest just sincere	
fair	commodious	appropriate
fall	—	autumn
fall (subst.)	ruin	collapse
fall	decay decline	decadence
fall	cadence	
farewell	—	valedictory
fatherly	paternal	parental

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
fearful	terrible	formidable
feed	nourish	nutrition
feere (poetic)	companion	associate
fellow	colleague companion comrade	associate
feud	enmity	hostility
fight (subst.)	battle	conflict
fight (verb)	contend	militate
fighting	militant warring	belligerent
filch	embezzlement	malversation
film	membrane	membranaceous
filth	—	squalor
find	devise	invent
find out	discover	detect discern
finger	—	digit digital
fire	flame	conflagration
fit match	suit	accommodate
fit	proper	appropriate
flashing	—	coruscation
flat	level	horizontal

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
flat	insipid	vapid
flaw	defect fault	imperfection
flock	—	gregarious
flood	deluge	cataclysm
foe	enemy	adversary hostile
folk	people	population
follow	pursue	prosecute
following	—	sequel
following	retinue suite train	
food	aliment nourishment sustenance	
footmark	trace	vestige
forbear	cease	desist
forbid	prohibition	veto
forestall	prevent	anticipate
foretell	prophesy	predict
forget	—	oblivion
forgive	pardon	condone venial
former	—	anterior previous

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
forward	pert	impudent petulant
foul	—	squalid
foul	false treacherous	dishonest sinister
freak	caprice capricious	vagary
free	bountiful generous liberal liberality	profuse
free	liberty	emancipated
free	easy unembarrassed unrestrained	
free-giving	bounteous liberal	liberality munificent munificence
fret	—	corrode
fret	chafe	irritate
frighten	alarm	terrify intimidate
full	complete	consummate
full	abundant sufficient	ample copious
fulness	plenty	abundance plenitude
further	promote	
game	disport sport	diversion

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
gap	space	interstice interval chasm
gather together	assemble	convene
get	attain obtain	acquire procure
ghastly	—	spectral
ghost	apparition	spectre
giddy giddiness	—	vertigo
gift	—	donation
give	grant	confer
giver	donor	benefactor
goods	chattels effects moveables personalty property stuff	furniture possessions
grating	—	strident
great	grand	magnificent
greatness	grandeur	magnificence
great greatness	enormous huge large vast	extent extensive immense magnitude
greedy	voracious voracity	
greedy	covetous	mercenary

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
green	verdant verdure	
greet	—	salute
greeting	—	salutation
growth	herbage	vegetation
growth	stature	
growth	enlargement expansion	development evolution
growth	increase	increment
guess	surmise suspicion	conjecture hypothesis supposition
guilt	—	criminality
hairy	—	hirsute
hallowed	sacred	consecrated
hand-writing	penmanship	calligraphy
hap	chance	accident
hard	firm solid	compact rigid substantial
hard	laborious	difficult
hard	—	obdurate obstinate
harm	damage hurt injury	detriment
harmful	injurious	deleterious noxious

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
hasty headlong headstrong rash	—	precipitate
hatred	aversion	antipathy
headlong	—	precipitate precipitancy
heap up	amass pile	accumulate
heart	courage	intrepidity
heed	caution regard	attention respect
height	eminence summit	culmination elevation
help	aid assist assistance	auxiliary co-operation
help	relieve succour	
hide	conceal	abscond elude
hill	mount	eminence
hinder	delay	retard
hinge	pivot	revolve
hint	suggestion	allusion insinuation intimation innuendo
hire	payment	remuneration

SAXON	ROMANIC	LATIN
hold (in, back)	curb check refrain restrain	
hole	cave	cavity
home (**homefast**)	domicile residence	domiciliary residentiary
homeborn	native	vernacular
hopeful	sanguine	ardent
hopeless	despair	desperate desperation
household	family	
hovel	cabin hut	wigwam
hue	colour tint	pigment
idleness	indolence	inactivity
ill-timed	unseasonable	inopportune
illwill	malice	malevolence
insight	—	penetration sagacity
irksome	toilsome troublesome	operose tedious
keep	defend guard preserve	protect
keep	observe	celebrate
keep in	restrain	

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
keep on	continue persevere	persist
kernel	core	nucleus
kind (subst.)	sort	species
kind (adj.)	amiable	affectionate
kingdom	realm	monarchy
knighthood	chivalry	
lasting	enduring	perpetual
laugh at	—	ridicule
laughter	—	cachinnation
law	rule	canon
lead	convoy escort	
lead	guide	direct regulate
lean (verb)	incline	inclination
lean (adj.)	meagre	emaciated
lessen	diminish	extenuate
let	check	impede impediment obstruct obstruction
lie	falsehood falsity	mendacious mendacity
lighten	—	illumination
lighten	—	alleviate

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
lighten	excuse	extenuate palliate
like	resembling similar	similitude
likely	probable	
likelihood	probability	verisimilitude
likeness	resemblance	similarity
limb	member	
limb	branch	ramification
lithe	pliant	flexible
look (subst.)	expression favour mien	
look for	expect	anticipate
lot	fortune	
lot	portion	subdivision
loud	sounding	resonant sonorous
loud	noisy	stentorian
low	base	abject degraded vile
low	humble	
luck	chance	accident fortuitous
lucky	—	fortunate

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
mad madness	frenzy	demented insane insanity lunacy lunatic
mar	discompose disfigure disturb	
match	rival	compete competitor competition
maze	perplexity	labyrinth
mean	purpose	propose
meaning	intent intention design purpose plan	determination resolution
meaning	sense	signification
meed	guerdon reward recompense	remuneration
meet	convenient suitable	commodious
meeting	assembly	congregation
merry	droll	jocose jocular
mirth	drollery	jocularity
mood	humour temper	disposition
moor moorings	—	anchor anchorage

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
mouth	entrance orifice	aperture
mouth	embouchure	
much	very	exceedingly
muddy	—	turbid
near	mean	parsimonious penurious
need	necessity	
needful	necessary	requisite
needy	poor	indigent
neighbourhood	vicinage	vicinity
odds	difference distinction	discrimination
old	antique antiquity	archaic archæology
old	tried	veteran
open	frank	candid ingenuous
outlandish	foreign	external
outskirts	border boundary coast frontier	limit
overcome	vanquish	insuperable
overlook	disregard	
overseer	supervisor	superintendent
overweening	arrogant	presumptuous

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
pat	applicable prompt suitable	apposite direct
peevish	petulant	irritable morose querulous
plight	engagement	promise
plight	condition	predicament
pluck	courage valour	
plucky	courageous	
praiseworthy	commendable	laudable
put off	defer delay	procrastinate procrastination
quake	tremble	tremendous tremulous
quench	—	extinguish
quick	alert	rapid vigilant
quicken	revive	reanimate reinvigorate
raise	enhance	elevate exalt
rash	sudden	instantaneous
raw	—	crude
rawness	—	crudity
reck care for	regard	consider

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
reckon	account count value	calculate compute estimate
reckon	esteem	appreciate
restless	disorderly	agitated turbulent
rich (herbage)	abounding	exuberant
riddle	charade puzzle question	enigma problem
rife	common general	epidemical prevalent
root out	—	extirpate
rope	cable	
rot	decay	putrefy
rover	corsair	pirate
rub out scrape ou	efface	erase obliterate
run after	chase pursue	
ruth fellow-feeling	pity	commiseration compassion sympathy
sad	doleful	melancholy
sameness	identity	
sameness	uniformity	monotony
scold	blame	objurgation

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
seek	search	examine scrutinize
seek	attempt endeavour try	
seek	quest	explore
sell	vend	vendible
shape	figure form fashion mould	configuration contour (Fr.)
short	brief	concise
shorten	abridge abridgment	abbreviate abbreviation
shew	display	manifest exhibit ostentation
show	pageant	exhibition pomp spectacle
showy	brave	ostentatious
showiness	bravery	ostentation ostentatiousness
shun	avoid	elude evade
sickly	—	morbid
silly	foolish	absurd insensate irrational stolid
sin	trespass	transgression

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
skill	discernment	dexterity discrimination tact
skin	—	cutaneous cuticle
slack	easy	lax remiss
slaughter	carnage massacre	
slope	incline	gradient
sly	subtle	clandestine
small	petty	diminutive inconsiderable insignificant minute unimportant
sneezing	—	sternutation
soothe	appease	consolatory
sore (subst.)	—	abscess ulcer
sore (adj.)	painful tender	irritable
sorry, sorrow	grief grieved trouble	affliction tribulation vexation
sour	—	acid acidity
speed	—	success
speed	celerity haste rapidity velocity	accelerate alacrity

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
spell	charm	incantation
spell	turn (of work)	
spring	—	vernal
squeamish	nice	fastidious
steal thieve	embezzle pilfer plagiarize purloin	peculation
steed (poetic)	palfrey charger	
steep	—	precipice precipitous
stir	uproar riot	agitation commotion tumult
stock	provision store	
stoop	—	condescend
stow	arrange dispose	deposit
stream	current river	
strife	quarrel	contention
strive	argue contend debate dispute	contention disputation
stumble	falter	
sweat	perspiration	sudatory sudorific

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
sweet	—	saccharine
sweet	nice	delicious
swift	rapid	velocity
take	receive	accept appropriate assume
take	seize	capture
take	catch entrap	
take	allure	attract captivate
take	—	apprehend comprehend
take	carry convey	transport
take	allow endure suffer	admit permit
take away	remove	deprive
take down	humble	reduce suppress
take from	—	derogate detract detraction
take in	comprise enclose	comprehend
take in	receive	admit
take off	destroy remove	invalidate

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
take off	copy portray	imitate mimic
take up	employ engage engross occupy occupation	
take upon	claim	appropriate assume
taking	alluring charming enchanting enticing	attractive captivating fascinating interesting
teach	train	direct educate instruct
tease	harass	irritate
tell	count	enumerate
tell	inform	delate
tell	relate	narrate
thankful	grateful	gratitude
thick	—	dense
thick	opaque	obscure
thick	—	turbid
thick-skinned	callous	indurated
thought	reflection	cogitation
threat	menace	
thrift thrifty	frugal frugality	economy economical

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
till	cultivate	agriculture
timely	seasonable	opportune
tire	fatigue	exhaust
toilsome	laborious	elaborate operose
token	evidence sign	symbol
token	guide	criterion
tool	contrivance machine	instrument
top	summit	apex vertex vertical
trust	credit	confidence
truth	verity	
truthful	—	veracious veracity
twit	reproach rebuke	animadvert reprehend
twain	couple	duality
twin twofold	pair	gemination
undo	annul	anhihilate
uneven	unequal	irregular
unforgiving	unmerciful	implacable
unmeet	inconvenient	indecorous

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
unsettled	vague	indefinite indeterminate
upbraid	reproach	objurgation
uphold	support sustain	
uproar	clamour	turbulence
vixen	termagant	
wages	salary	stipend
wail	lament	
wailing	dirge elegy	lamentation
wagon, wain	carriage	vehicle
wan	pale	pallid
wandering strolling	vagrant	itinerant vagabond
wanton	pert saucy	petulant licentious
warlike	martial	militant military
warning	notice	notification publication
wash	lave	ablution abstersion
water (verb)	—	irrigate
watery	—	aqueous
wavering	—	vacillation
way	course	direction

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
way	manner	mode
way	means	method scheme
weak (bodily)	frail feeble invalid	fragile impotent
weak (argument)	invalid	invalidity
weak (morally)	imbecile	imbecility
weakness	frailty	fragility debility
wealth	—	felicity prosperity
wealth	riches	opulence
weary	fatigued	exhausted
well-timed	seasonable	opportune
whet sharpen		
whet	—	excite stimulate
whirl	turn	revolve rotate rotation
whim	caprice	vagary
whim	fancy	velleity
whisk	flourish	
wholly	entirely	absolutely
wilderness	desert	desolation solitude

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
wile	deceit guile	artifice stratagem
will	volition	voluntary
will	—	testament
wink at	ignore inattention	
winnow	purge	expurgate
wipe out	cancel	expunge
witchcraft	sorcery	divination
withstand	resist resistance	opposition antagonism
witness	testify	attest attestation testimony
wonder	marvel	portent
wonder	astonishment	admiration
wont	use	habitude
work	effort labour	operation
workman	labourer	operative
worldly	—	mundane secular
worn	spent	exhausted
worry	harass	irritate
worth	value	
worse	impair	deteriorate

Saxon	Romanic	Latin
wrangle	contentious disputatious	
wreak	revenge	retaliate vindictive
wrong	iniquity injury injustice	
yield	grant	concede concession

These groups of words are not offered as exact equivalents of each other: indeed, they are not always of the same part of speech, but they are germane to the same matter, and may be conveniently employed in the same context, so that they may fairly be taken to represent the choice of expression which is at the service of the writer. They are not so entirely equivalent that they may be used indifferently and at hap-hazard. It is not a matter of indifference which is adopted, but a matter of experience and choice and taste. The general state of the case may be illustrated from the words *knighthood* and *chivalry*. These two words are nearly synonymous: that is, they may often, though not always, be used in the same sense and be substituted for one another. We may say 'the order of knighthood,' or 'the order of chivalry,' when we use these phrases as general designations of social ranks. But when we come to more special applications of the terms, we have to observe distinctions. We could not say that such a person had received the order of chivalry or that he had lived in the age of knighthood. If we speak of the tenure of lands, we may say they are held in chivalry, not in knighthood; yet speaking of the personal rank or degree, we call it knighthood, not chivalry. Although the two words have the same general meaning, whether applied to territorial position or to personal dignity, or to the social institutions of a particular age, yet they do nevertheless afford occasions for selection and preference.

The knowledge of words in their mental incidence and artistic effect is something that must be gained slowly by long experience, because it is numerically extensive, it is multitudinous, it is not capable of being reduced to heads or rules, but must depend upon the stores of memory, and the culture of the perceptive faculty. Hence the need of constant acquaintance and familiarity with the best authors. Perhaps the facts presented to the reader in this chapter may help to stimulate observation, and may suggest some remarks of practical utility. Looking at this table of Trilogies, we may observe a remarkable difference in the right-hand column as contrasted with that on the extreme left. The third column has a tendency to gather in clusters and bunches; the first column has a contrary tendency to scatter itself by subdivision and reiteration. While the third column offers a plurality of words for one function, the first column often partitions single words among a variety of analogous functions. As to the clusters on the right hand, they strike the eye, and make further illustration unnecessary, but the partitioning of the left hand might be overlooked, and therefore I refer especially to the following words:—*body, bold, breach, bright, care, craft, draw, dull, empty, fair, fall, fit, flat, free, full, growth, hard, keep, lead, lot, loud, low, meaning, reckon, show, speed, spell, take, tell, token, way, weak, wealth, wonder.*

And although we have indeed lost a large part of our old Saxon vocabulary, yet it rarely happens but there exists what I may call a representative of the Saxon word for any context. In the practical work of composition, the essential thing is to have a choice between an old word and a modern one, between one that is worn smooth and one that is stark new, between a more general expression and a more specific one. And this choice still continues to present itself even in cases where the Saxon word is obsolete. For in such cases it very rarely happens that the second column fails. Where the second column is vacant, it is so for the most part precisely because of the vitality of the older Saxonic word, which has left no field or function to a substitute. But where the Saxon word has perished there will almost certainly be a word of the Romanic cast, and this supplies the essentials of choice. And here I may again call

attention to the meaning of the double line which is drawn between the second column and the third; the real division for literary purposes lying there, and not where etymology would place it, between the first column and the second.

It may be convenient if I here add a few examples of this duplicate choice: the choice, namely, between a domesticated old word of Romanesque origin and a Latin or Greek one of recent and scholastic introduction.

Romanic	Latin	Romanic	Latin
adroit	dexterous	charge	expense
adroitness	dexterity	charge	accusation
agreed	unanimous	charge	mandate
aim	scope	cloke	excuse palliate
air	ventilate	comfort	console
antiquities	archæology	company	society
assail	impugn	copy	transcribe
award	arbitration	decay	decadence
banishment	exile	discern	discriminate
besotted	infatuated	discovery	detection
box	chest	dissection	anatomy
box	division	dissemble	dissimulation
calm tranquil	quiet	envious	invidious
calumny	defamation	exact (verb)	extort
chain	catena concatenation	exact (adj.)	definite precise
change	alteration mutability vicissitude	feign	simulate simulation dissimulation

Romanic	Latin	Romanic	Latin
guerdon payment recompense reward	remuneration	restrain	inhibit
		revere	venerable
		revolt	rebellion
haughty	supercilious	sample	example specimen
inquest	inquisition		
invective	diatribe	sense	consciousness
leisure	vacation	silent	reticent taciturn
mean-spirited	pusillanimous	slander	defamation
number	enumerate	training	discipline
plot	conspiracy	trespass	transgression
poison	venom	try	examine
porch	vestibule	try	attempt
post	occupation office station	unavoidable	inevitable
		valid	conclusive decisive
praise	eulogy laudatory panegyric	vanish	evanescent
		variety	diversification
pray	supplicate	venal	mercenary
prestige illusion	fascination	vex	irritate
renounce	renunciation	vie	emulation
repayment	compensation	voluble	fluent
reproach	opprobrium	wait	attend

These examples will suffice to indicate that while the gradation of choice is frequently threefold, it is not always so. In a large number of instances the first rank, the native English, has fallen into desuetude. In such cases, it almost always happens that there is more than one form of expression which later times have created and retained in use. But whether it be the first rank that is wanting, or the second, or the third, it rarely happens that more than one fails; and it will almost always be found that the vocabulary is at least duplicate, and that by this means the writer has a field of choice on each occasion, if not between three, at least between two different manners of expression.

This remarkable stratification of the English vocabulary is not merely a dictionary record or a philological preparation; it is practically exercised in English diction. The growth and storage of faculty in a language are the accumulated result of habit and usage. We possess this wealth of selection because our language has been placed in the way of abundance and it has turned the opportunity to account by discreet aggregation of a copious and varied word-store. I take the Book of Common Prayer as the most central and national example of genuine English,[1] and there I find that a duplicate phraseology abounds in every part. Upon every page we find such examples as the following:—'weighty and important considerations—the exigency of times and occasions—changes and alterations—acknowledge and confess—dissemble nor cloke—assemble and meet together—requisite and necessary—pray and beseech—remission and forgiveness—adorned and beautified—enterprized nor taken in hand—image and similitude—loving and amiable.'

Compare *epidemical and rife* in the following quotation:—

> In order whereto I have now selected one sin to describe, and to dissuade from, being in nature as vile, and in practice as common, as any other whatever that hath prevailed among men. It is slander, a sin which in all times and places hath been epidemical and rife; but which especially doth seem to reign and rage in our age and country.—Isaac Barrow, *The Folly of Slander.*

[1] If any doubt this, let them see the fine eulogy by Macaulay on the diction of the Common Prayer Book, in the fourteenth chapter of his History.

In an article which appeared in *The Times* a few days before the Thanksgiving Day for the recovery of the Prince of Wales, one passage was thus bilingually illustrated:—*spectators, spectacle, sight, see*:—

One cannot help fearing that the procession of Tuesday next will not be very imposing as a spectacle. The spectators themselves will be a far grander sight than that which they will assemble to see.

In the following we have *golden, auriferous, aureate.*

The atmosphere Mrs. Linden had always breathed was aureate; the ground she had trodden upon was auriferous; her very dreams had been golden.—James Payn, 'The Burnt Million' (*Cornhill Magazine*, July 1889, p. 23).

In the following quotation (of which the reference is lost) we may readily observe how by the variation of words—(1) sleep, winter-sleep, summer-sleep, sleeping, sleepers; (2) dormancy, somnolence; (3) hibernate, hibernation, hibernating, hibernator, æstivation, æstivator, torpid—there is added to the discourse two opposite kinds of excellence: namely, on the one hand what we may call a weight of metal, and on the other hand a lightness of pressure which affords agility to the movement. These are very important elements of force and effect and readableness.

As every one knows, a number of the Northern species escape the rigour of Winter by retiring into holes, there to pass the season during which food is scarce, in a condition of dormancy. Some, like the squirrels and the dormice, sleep as if they were dead, then suddenly revive on a fine day, visit their hoards of food, and retire to hibernate for several weeks more. All our native reptiles lie in a torpid condition until the Summer sun stimulates them into renewed life; while the snails creep into holes in the walls or into the ground, there to lie, foodless and apparently lifeless, until the period of leafing comes back again. But as we go further South hibernation ceases. There, however, what exactly corresponds to it—namely, æstivation, or, as the Germans term it, Summer-sleep—takes its place, and serves the same purpose. When the heat of a tropical or semi-tropical Summer dries up every pool, and parches the ground to such an extent that it is difficult for animals, not

endowed with great powers of locomotion, to find the wherewithal for existence, they compromise with Nature by sleeping off the season of heat and scarcity. This sleep, like the Winter one, is akin, no doubt, to that in which all animals and many plants indulge for several hours either during day or night. But it is deeper, more death-like, and not much resembling in reality the rest which a tired brain and body require. It has been claimed that during hibernation the life of the sleeper is sustained by the nourishment stored up in a special gland. This may, no doubt, be true of some species. But, unfortunately for this theory, the 'hibernating gland' does not exist in all hibernators. Nor does anything akin to it find a place in the organization of the Summer sleepers. Moreover, many of the latter, like several of the former, do not seem to require any nourishment during their period of somnolence. The functions of digestion, assimilation, and excretion, are suspended until they awake. This, at least, is the view held by the Northern Naturalists. The Winter sleepers are all pretty well known. But, owing to the æstivators being, for the most part, inhabitants of tropical countries far removed from the path of trained observers, we are less acquainted with the species practising that means of shunning the heat and drought of summer.

The above tabulations have a basis in history; they set before the eye a chart of the progress of the language with the traces of those vicissitudes through which it has passed from time to time, as Saxon and Danish; or French, Spanish, and Italian; or Latin and Greek, have had their season of ascendency. It will naturally be understood that such a chart is not complete as to details, that it cannot pretend to do more than present a typical outline. And even in this limited sense, the record is incomplete. For there is at least one important element of expression which is not represented. Hitherto we have been speaking as if choice of expression meant no more than choice of words. But in the modern language choice of expression often becomes a question, not between word and word, but between a word and a group of words—that is to say, between a word and a phrase. In the following quotation, see how the phrase 'all too soon' and the epithet 'premature' respond to one another.

If there were no other objection to our according a triumph to Lord Beaconsfield, there would be objection enough found in the

fact that it is all too soon, that it is premature, to exult just yet.—*Daily News*, July 17, 1878.

Phrases are too variable to admit of tabulation; no system of tabulation could adequately (even in a typical sense) represent the full extent of the range which we have in our diversified choice of expression.[1]

And there is another formation, which is now assuming considerable proportions, not included in, or at least not specifically indicated by, the above tables. During the present century new forms of words have been made upon the oldest—that is, upon the Saxon—model. This is a new movement and one for which the public taste is increasing, and we may expect to see it bringing considerable accessions to our vocabulary. Thus I notice that those public benefactors who cease not to insist upon the need of making primary and secondary education more technical, in addition to the old phrases 'manual dexterity,'—'skilful manipulation,'—'education of the hand,' and such like,—have recently acquired a new word, one which is constructed of the oldest materials, and that when they are praising the handicraft training of the Sloyd system which is carried on at Naes near Gotenburg, in Sweden, they talk of the importance of teaching 'handiness'—a derivative so new, that not only is it not in the school dictionaries such as Chambers' Etymological Dictionary, but it is not so much as noticed by Skeat in his list of Derivatives under the adjective Handy.

And here we must notice another recent movement of considerable importance, namely, the revival of our vernacular faculty of compounding. There is perhaps no greater evidence of the profound influence of the Romanic element upon English than that it had led us off to phraseology in lieu of that habit of making compounds which was our natural heritage. On the other hand there is no stronger proof of the deep influence of German literature in this country, than

[1] Sometimes a petty comic incident of homely life may rouse us to observe the extent of this range. I said to a housemaid, 'Have you done my room, Sarah?' The answer came, 'Yes, sir, with the exception of the coal-box.' But r the Department of Education, it would have been 'all but the coal-box.'

the fact that it has roused us to the effort of recovering this important factor in our literary diction.

The two movements last indicated take an opposite direction from that of phraseology, and it is manifest that the field of choice is vastly widened by the combined action of this with those. New words after the old native type and compounds on the one hand; enlargement by means of phrases on the other; with all the stratified vocabulary lying between;—altogether, the expanse open to selection is exceedingly widened. A 'spurt' is a 'violent exertion' or a 'convulsive effort'; but how widely different in effect is the curt from the phrasal expression, and how great an advantage to the artist to have such a range of selection in his materials.

Mere spurts, now in one branch of business, now in another, may disturb totals and excite hopes of better times for a month or two; but they give no warranty of endurance.—*The Standard*, February 8, 1889.

We have the curt expression 'pat'—and we have longer words that will convey the same idea, as applicable, prompt, suitable, apposite, direct—there is moreover the phrase 'to the point' 'or to the purpose.'

There has been in our day a very marked return towards 'Saxon English,' that is, towards the elder elements of English. In some cases this revival of natural affection has been very conspicuously expressed, as in certain of the writings of Professor Stephens and of Dr. Furnivall. There can be no doubt that such demonstrations are typical, and that the tendency to Saxon English is the effect of a natural reaction in a language sated with foreign imports. One eminent writer avowed it as his practice in his own composition to strike out every Latin word which could be replaced by a Saxon word. About twenty years ago there appeared a Sermon (which we shall have to quote in another chapter) written 'in words of one syllable only: By a Manchester Layman.' The interest attaching to such a phenomenon is all the greater, because this Sermon, though a very insipid performance, attracted attention and had a considerable sale.

I have already said—but it is important enough to be

repeated—that this vast choice of vocabulary is something quite peculiar to the English language. Nothing like it exists in French, or in Italian, or even in the voluminous German; much less did such copiousness exist in the ancient languages of Hebrew, Greek, or Latin. It is indeed true that numerous illustrations of the kind might be drawn from any one of those languages, shewing that the vocabulary of such and such a language was furnished with duplicate terms or expressions in this or that subject, and that one or the other set of words was called into action according as the writer's intention required simplicity or impressiveness, dignity or familiarity. Such a supply of expressions, more or less, is essential to the character of a literary language. But that throughout a whole language there should be found a double or triple assortment of expressions applicable to almost every variety of matter, is a thing found in the English language alone. It is therefore of the first importance that the writer should be familiar with these conditions of the language; for such knowledge amounts only to the musician's knowledge of the instrument upon which he has to perform, or the painter's knowledge of his colouring materials and their several effects.

It is a useful rule for the young writer, never to allow himself to use an unauthorized word. There is a saying of Cæsar's—and he was an excellent judge—that an unusual word should be shunned as a ship would shun a reef—*insolens verbum tanquam scopulum vitandum*. Burke is recorded to have said that he never allowed himself to use a word which had not the authority of Dryden.

But it is quite possible to overstrain such a rule as this. Rigidly maintained, it would contradict nature, for words, like other tools, wear out (as Horace said) and new ones are wanted to keep the language going. To understand the absolute form of Cæsar's dictum we must remember that the golden age of classical Latin was perhaps the most fastidiously puristical age in all literature. We are now speaking of English;—and there never was a great language that was more tolerant of reasonable innovation than English is. I do not know whether it can be said that an equal freedom is enjoyed by the writer in German;—but I rather doubt it.

How far this liberty may be carried we have evidence enough in the practice of Carlyle, who coined so many new words that somebody speaking by way of joke, said he aspired to the honours of Jean Paul Richter, who had a dictionary written all for himself. Certain it is, that a reader who is not familiar with other languages, especially Latin, will often in reading Carlyle desire to consult a dictionary and if he does so he will very likely consult it in vain.

The existence of this liberty makes it all the more important to observe how rarely a new word is coined by some of our most consummate authors. The two most copious and fluent of our prose writers, Johnson and Macaulay, may be cited on this head; for the first hardly ever coined a word; the second never. They had not the temptation; their tenacious memories were ever ready with a supply of old and appropriate words, which were therefore the best, because their associations were established in them.

The doctrine of Quintilian on this matter is more elastic than that of Cæsar:—Quintilian said, that authorized words were safer, and that the coining of new ones had its risk.[1]

Throughout this chapter I have spoken, in accordance with the title of it, as if in this survey of our Stores of words we were pursuing the idea of selection and of choice. This idea is indeed of great importance, and quite sufficient to occupy our attention for one while; but it is by no means coextensive with the purpose of the above Tables, nor does it render a full account of the benefits to be derived from the possession of a deeply stratified language. Other advantages will open to our view as we proceed, when we shall have other aspects of English Prose successively brought under review.

[1] Usitatis tutius utimur; nova non sine quodam periculo fingimus.—*Inst. Orat.* i. 5, § 71.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPORT OF GRAMMAR

Differing views on the Study of Grammar—1. Of the Nature of Words (Parts of Speech): *a. Presentives*: Substantive (—Compounds—Plurality), Adjective, Adverb, Verb (Mood, Tense Attraction), Flexional Infinitive (Verbal Noun); *b. Symbolics*: Article, Pronoun, Preposition, Conjunction—2. Of Structural Usage—*a.* The Phrase—*b.* The Clause—*c.* Sentences: (1) Simplex, (2) Composita, (3) Evoluta;—the involved Sentence;—the Periodic Sentence—Mixed Sentences—*d.* The Paragraph—3. Logical Analysis of Sentences—Its usefulness as an educational instrument—The relation it bears to Prose Diction.

Nihil ex grammatica nocuerit nisi quod supervacuum est; neque enim obstant hæ disciplinæ per illas euntibus, sed circa illas hærentibus.—Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* i. 4.

Il luy avoit fait voir en general ce que c'étoit que les langues; il luy montroit comme on les avoit reduites en grammaires sous de certaines regles; que ces regles avoient encore des exceptions qu'on avoit eu soin de remarquer; et qu'ainsi l'on avoit trouvé le moyen par là, de rendre toutes les langues communicables d'un païs en un autre.

Cette idée generale lui débrouilloit l'esprit, et lui faisoit voir la raison des regles de la grammaire, de sorte que quand il vint à l'apprendre, il sçavoit pourquoi il le faisoit, et il s'appliquoit precisément aux choses à quoy il faloit le plus d'application.—*La Vie de M. Pascal, Ecrite par Madame Perier, sa Sœur.*

THE most universal medium of education, next after the three R's, is Grammar. The utility of this study is sometimes called in question, but still it is constantly retained in practice. Only so short a time ago as June 2, 1888, a correspondent in *The Times* attacked with eloquence and apparent ratiocination what he was pleased to call 'the false and unreal art of grammar'—writing all the while very much like a grammatically educated gentleman. Such invectives are launched from time to time, without seeming to fetch any answer, or to draw after them any consequence.

It may tend to clear the matter up, if we first ask whether

the term 'Grammar' has in current usage one uniform sense and meaning. Because, if it has more meanings than one, it may be possible to make assertions about Grammar which are formally contrary to one another, while at the same time the several speakers have no difference of opinion. To avoid verbal confusion, it is well to make sure of the usage of the term, before we discuss opinions about it.

The most general and popular idea about English Grammar is this,—that it teaches you to speak and write English with propriety. If we look into almost any one of the numerous manuals on the subject we shall easily perceive by the Definition of Grammar with which they mostly begin, that this is the prevailing idea of the benefit to be obtained from the study of Grammar. The student learns the standard usage of the language, he is shamed out of any little inelegant phrases he may have picked up at home, he is guaranteed against solecisms, he is taught not to say 'I is a good boy' or 'It is me,' or 'Give it to I,' or 'Handsome is as handsome does,' and he is instructed how contrary to reason is a Double Negative.

In the thirteenth century the function of Grammar was defined by Brunetto Latini, and it is hardly too much to say that his idea has reigned in elementary Grammars, French and English, down to the present time. He said in his Old French: '*Gramatique*, qui est fondemenz et porte et entrée des aultres sciences . . . . nos enseigne à parler et à lire et à escrire à droit, sans vice de barbarisme et de solœcisme'[1]: i.e. 'Grammar, which is the foundation and gate and entry of the other sciences . . . . instructs us to speak and to read and to write correctly, without the flaw of barbarism and of solecism.'

Were this the whole scope of grammatical study, the contention of the dissatisfied correspondent in *The Times* would be abundantly justified. For it may reasonably be urged, that the son of a well-conditioned family, who has heard nothing all his life but good English, has none of those little vulgarities to unlearn. And further, it may be asked What is the nature, quality, and rank of this knowledge in itself? Is it open, generous, enlarging to the mind; or is it confined, arbitrary, local? The answer is not doubtful. The

[1] *Li Livres dou tresor*, p. 8–9.

knowledge of the usage of the current speech is only important because of the great inconvenience of wanting it. The advantage conferred by this knowledge is negative only, it is but the removal of a disability. It is like the common forms of deportment in society; we cannot get on without them, but there is little in them that commands our esteem. They are perfectly arbitrary; in other countries they are different, even opposite. They have no ground in reason; at least no further than this, that there must be *some* forms, and whatever the forms selected, they will be equally accidental and conventional. So with Grammar in the sense hitherto noticed; it is a set of rules and directions in the conventionalities of the language. The reason why those phrases are bad is only because they are unfashionable; there is nothing deeper in the distinction; even the logical wisdom which rules out the Double Negative is but shallow sophistry. It may safely be said of some of the best prose ever written that it absolutely swarms with Double Negatives. If anyone doubts this, let him read a few pages of Plato or of Demosthenes.

M. Ch. Marty-Laveaux, to whom I am indebted for the thirteenth century quotation above, offers a new definition of the scope of Grammar. He says: 'La GRAMMAIRE a pour objet l'étude des MOTS considérés quant à leur NATURE, quant à leur FORME et quant à leur EMPLOI,'[1] i.e. 'GRAMMAR directs us to the study of WORDS considered with regard to their NATURE, with regard to their FORM, and with regard to their USAGE.'

Of the three elements here enumerated, as together constituting the scope of Grammar, there is one of which so much has been made, that we must direct a careful attention to it. Some authors have practically erected 'Form,' that is to say, the varieties of Accidence, into the whole or the chief thing in Grammar. When we meet with the statement that in ancient Chinese there is no trace of Grammar, we see here that 'Grammar' means inflections, terminations, or other variations of form by which syntactic relations are indicated.

[1] *Grammaire Historique de la Langue Française*, par Ch. Marty-Laveaux, Paris, 1875.

I have heard it asserted (and by no mean authority) that English has no Grammar, and what the speaker intended to say was this :—That the language has few grammatical forms, that the termination *s* as the mark of genitive singular and of plural number in nouns, and as the exponent of the third person singular of the present indicative in verbs; and the endings *-er* and *-est* for the comparison of Adjectives; and one or two more of such inconspicuous tags, are all that is now left of Flexion to the English language. In the mind of that speaker, Grammar would chiefly signify diagrams of Declension, and Conjugation, schemes of Case and Tense and Mood, and the like. This sense of the word prevails with teachers of the classical Languages, and it has of late years been a good deal taken over by students of Comparative Philology. This is the usage of specialists; it is circumscribed, and technical; it may advantageously be handed over as the appanage of Comparative Philology, for English Grammar, so far from having need of it or suffering by lack of it, will then shine out in fuller lustre when quite disencumbered of it.

Dismissing then the notion of conventional propriety as too trivial and narrow a thing for the scope of Grammar; and further, discarding the treatment of Accidence as more germane to philological dissection; we find in the remaining two factors of the French Grammarian's definition a very reasonable and proper division of the purview of Grammar—viz. *the Nature of words, and their Employment, or the manner of their Usage.*

The Nature of words is a larger and more philosophical way of describing the doctrine of the Parts of Speech. For this latter and more familiar expression is liable to misconstruction as if it imported a rigid classification, a cave-like seclusion of word-groups; as if there were no touch of kindred between the categories, and as if their badges were reciprocally intransferable.

Under the head of the second factor, the Employment or Usage of Words, will naturally fall every combination that is possible, from the shortest phrase to the longest paragraph.

These two branches have the character of Universality in

them, and they give the true adit to the Philosophy of Language. They touch at once the inner and the outer, the inner in the doctrine of the Parts of Speech; the outer in the fabric of composite discourse. A study on these lines is worthy of the eulogy which Sir John Stoddart pronounced when the vista of it was opened before him in the pages of James Harris, the author of 'Hermes.' He was worthy of the mantle of him whose writings, as he says, he redd 'with avidity in early youth, and felt as if his mental eye had been couched, discovering with surprise that the driest of all his compulsory tasks, teemed with attractions worthy to make Grammar the hobby of a lifetime.' We may illustrate his notion of Grammar by quoting a few lines from the book which appeared in the ripeness of his age.

In the course of time, teachers of reading and writing, in any one language, found it necessary to lay down rules for reading and writing it well, which rules were deemed the Grammaticê or Grammar, of that Language; and these again were found to result from certain common principles, which constitute the science of *Universal Grammar*, and of which I intend to speak in the first part of the following treatise. The rules which form the Grammar of a particular language, in so far as they differ from those of any other, are owing to accidental and temporary circumstances, the investigation of which belongs rather to the history than to the science of Language. Universal Grammar, on the contrary, disregarding that which is peculiar to the speech of this or that tribe, nation, or race, considers only what is common to man in all ages and countries.—*The Philosophy of Language*, by Sir John Stoddart, edited by W. Hazlitt; 'Introduction.' [1]

This sounds rather abstract, but it is only a step higher in generalization beyond what is contained in the knowledge of every clever schoolboy. Any boy, who really knows the Parts of Speech, has virtually in him the essence of Universal Grammar. For the doctrine of the Parts of Speech is a universal doctrine; in appearance it is the analysis of a particular sentence; but in reality it is the analysis of a mental operation. The study of Grammar, properly taught,

[1] Originally, this work formed one of the volumes of the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, as far back as 1849.

is a study in the region of Psychology; and there is not one educated man in ten thousand, that ever advances in psychological knowledge beyond what is germinally contained in the doctrines of the Parts of Speech.[1]

How then—it may naturally be asked—how does it come to pass that cultivated men can be found who still rail at Grammar, like the correspondent of *The Times* two years ago? It is simply because they have never been taught Grammar in such a way as to open the mind and to implant in it a life-long gratitude for one of the sweetest of pleasures, the pleasure which youth experiences in discovering within itself that boundless power of comprehension which is awakened in the mind by Grammar rightly apprehended. If Grammar is taught mechanically, the Parts of Speech are learned by the outward semblance rather than by the inward sense, and the mind remains unenlightened. The Latin Grammar favours this inattention, this mechanical and formal recognition; the words are labelled by their terminations, and enough can be got up by rote for the avoiding of grammatical blunders in the discharge of scholastic routine.

1. Of the Nature of Words.

Words are the correlatives of thought, and the Nature of words consists in that which characterizes their relation to the thought of each sentence wherein they are used. Grammar, in its worthiest and most proper sense, contemplates words, phrases, and sentences, as representing the structure and articulation of thought. It is from some such an idea of

[1] Prof. Max Müller has repeatedly spoken of Grammar, but his utterances want consistency. In his first Series of Lectures, iv., he said that the Parts of Speech 'were a merely artificial network thrown over the living body of language.' Yet he proceeds immediately to bring the strongest imaginable evidence to the contrary, in the agreement of the Hindu system of grammar with that of the Greek, 'which would seem to prove that there must be some true and natural foundation for the much-abused grammatical system of the schools.' In the same context he says that Greek Grammar owed its origin to the critical study of Homer. But in *Chips*, iv. 401, he has conjured up a picturesque contrast between Greek and Indian grammar, as if the former had a theoretical and the latter an empirical origin.

Grammar as this, that the technical term 'Parts of Speech,' and all the doctrine hinging on it, has been evolved.

It will be the aim of this Chapter, not to give a complete sketch of English Grammar, but rather to offer upon the more prominent Parts of Speech such remarks as may be useful to the intending writer, and more particularly such as are not generally to be found in English Grammars. For this purpose it will be convenient to take first the Presentive words, leaving the Symbolics to come after.

We will begin with the Substantive. When a substantive is used as an adjective to another substantive, the word so used sometimes retains its separate character and stands free of the substantive to which it relates; sometimes it is connected with it by a hyphen; and sometimes it is so completely joined to it, as to make the two words grow together into one. We read in Lindley Murray that the distinct separation is proper, when one of the words is long, or when they cannot be fluently pronounced as one word: as, *a silver watch, a stone cistern*:—the hyphen is used, when both the words are short, and are readily pronounced as a single word: as, *coal-mine, fruit-tree*: the words blend together and are pronounced as one, when they have a long established association, and are in frequent use: as, *butterfly, gingerbread, honeycomb, penny-piece*. Such is the doctrine of Lindley Murray.

But it should be observed that the very same words are sometimes coupled in one way and sometimes in the other, by which we know that it cannot be the length or individual sound of the words upon which the difference hinges. For example, we may say *black bird*, as '*The crow is a black bird*'; and again we may in its proper place say *blackbird* as one word; but it would be ridiculous to say 'The crow is a blackbird.'

The fact seems to be that the change from the state of construction, like *honey bee*, to the state of a compound, like *honeycomb*, is a thing of movement and transition, always progressing, but with more rapid coalition in one instance than in another. The true guide for a writer is his cultivated ear; this must tell him when the words are two, when to be hyphened, when one.

Plurality.

Plurality appertains properly only to those things that are capable of number, that is, to things concrete. Strictly speaking, there is no plural of an Abstract word. A great many seeming exceptions to this statement will readily crowd on the mind, but before they are admitted to be exceptions, they must be examined.

Beauty is an abstract term, and as such has no plural; when we speak of *beauties*, we use indeed a plural, but the singular to this plural is not 'beauty'—it is 'a beauty,' which is a concrete expression.

The word *witness* as an abstract form, signifies evidence as the rudiment of conviction. Yet we say *witnesses*, and this looks like the plural of an Abstract, yet it is not so. The word has changed sense, and has come to signify the medium or vehicle of evidence; and with this sense it is no longer an Abstract, it has become a concrete word.

The word *evidence* itself has no plural in that original and abstract state, in which it signified the virtue of clearness. 'Evidentia in narratione,' says Quintilian, 'est quidem magna virtus,' 'Clearness in statement is certainly a great quality.'[1] But when we speak of *evidences*, we mean not the clearness itself, but certain means of producing clearness. So *essence* in its abstract sense has no plural; but the things we call *essences* are concrete enough to need no further description.

Knowledge is an abstract term and properly signifies a condition of the mind, and in this original sense it has no plural. Bacon indeed speaks of knowledges, but then he has for the nonce changed the sense of the word to that power which admits of plurality. In the following quotation from *The Advancement of Learning*, Book ii., it is plain that *knowledges* are branches of knowledge. 'Knowledges are as pyramids, whereof history is the basis. So of natural philosophy, the basis is natural history; the stage next the basis

[1] It is in this original sense that the Revisers of 1611 appear to have put 'evidence' into Hebrews xi. 1, where Tyndale had 'certainty'—'Fayth is a sure confidence of thynges which are hoped for, and a certayntie of thynges which are not sene.'

is physic; the stage next the vertical point is metaphysic.' Examples of this kind may be collected in any number, so that we are warranted in the general statement, that the very pluralization of a word is a sign that such word is not essentially an Abstract, whatever it may be in form. And this consideration will help us to observe that when Carlyle uses plurality for real Abstracts, as he repeatedly does, he puts a certain violence upon language for the sake of enhancing effect, and this is one of the means whereby his extraordinary effects are produced, effects vague and vast, sometimes verily Titanic. This is the justification of his *audacities, credibilities, Transcendentalisms, unutterabilities*:—'one's heart flutters on the verge of dread unutterabilities.'—*Fr. Rev.* II. iii. 6.

Substantives, Adjectives and Adverbs.

The Substantive represents substance, and the Adjective represents quality. But there is a constant tendency of the Adjective to be changed into a Substantive; to pass (that is) from the presentation of quality to the presentation of the substance in which the quality resides. Mr. Freeman has shewn a disposition to resist this tendency; he does not like 'cardinal' or 'cathedral' as substantives; he prefers to write 'cardinal priest' and 'cathedral church.' But this resistance of his takes practical effect only upon a very small proportion of the instances, just those which happen to press closest upon his observation in his special studies. A great number of substantives of the same class pass under his pen unchallenged. The tendency is too strong to be checked by the hand of any one author; it may even be doubted whether an Academy could control it. There is no saying what might not be done if there were an Academy which commanded the willing and complete obedience of all English writers throughout the world. Such an Institution might perhaps, while its power and vigilance lasted, succeed in a defiance of nature, like that national effort which in Holland keeps the water from finding its natural level. As a slight indication of the frequency of substantives of this make, I will here collect the scattered examples of the kind which are incidentally noticed

but nowhere collected in my *English Philology*:—*alien, alternative, annuitant, assailant, campaign, captain, chaplain, chieftain, Christian, claimant, commandant, confessional, cordial, descendant, detective, dignitary, diocesan, executive, expedient, fountain, general, incident, inhabitant, initial, insolvent, invective, jewel, lavatory, logic, material, metropolitan, motive, mountain, music, narrative, observatory, official, palliative, patient, prebendary, precedent, prerogative, principal, professional, Puritan, quadrant, representative, rhetoric, scholar, sedative, serjeant, servant, signatary, sloven, sovereign, student, superintendent, veteran, victual, villain, warden.*

As Adjectives for the most part express Quality, so the Adverbs which accompany them are for the most part Adverbs of Degree, that is to say, Adverbs which either enhance or diminish Quality. The Adverb of Degree is more particularly the property of the Adjective. Not that this Adverb does not also accompany the Verb. More than any other Part of Speech the Verb has occasion for the services of subsidiary Parts of Speech, and accordingly they gather around the Verb in great numbers and in great variety. Among the other satellites of the Verb appears also the Adverb of Degree, especially the adverb *much*: 'If you will be so kind, it will help me much.' 'Do you wish it? I wish it much.' But there is one Adverb of Degree which does not render this attendance upon the Verb; it is the adverb *very*, which is the singular and undivided property of the Adjective—e.g. 'very tall, very wise, very good,' but it will not go with a Verb. And this is the rationale of that rule which is laid down about the qualification of Participles, viz. that 'very' is not to be joined with a Participle. We do sometimes hear 'very pleased,' but 'much pleased' is more correct. Still further removed from good usage is 'very obliged,' 'very disappointed.'

But while the Adjective is mostly accompanied by the Adverb of Quality, it is also capable of drawing to its side the Adverb of Time. Now the Adverb of Time is (broadly speaking) a Verbal property. 'I saw it once, you did it twice, he said it thrice, &c.' But there is in the Adjective a latent verbal nature which sometimes comes out and manifests

itself, and then it can attach to itself an Adverb of Time. Or perhaps it might be more correct if this statement were inverted, and if we said thus—that an Adverb, drawn from the Verbal service and attached to an Adjective, has upon that Adjective a vivifying effect, eliciting its latent verbal quality, and evoking its faculty of predication. In the following quotation this effect appears in the phrase 'a once scrupulous.'

No word of ours can add anything to the melancholy evidence of the moral plight to which a once scrupulous statesman has been reduced.—*The Standard*, January 23, 1889.

The vast bulk of our Adverbs end in *-ly*, and this formative displays a strong tendency to encroachment and annexation. To know when to refuse admittance to this adverbial termination is among the things that cannot be taught by rule. It is a point to which attention should be given, especially by those who are apt to be profuse in adverbs, like the writer of the subjoined extract.

Our church singing is too often merely mechanical. Now some hymns should be sung briskly, others moderately, and others again slowly, or with much variety of expression. The best organists are the most careful to adapt the music and the mode of playing to the sense of the words. But I have heard 'Lo, He comes, &c.,' sung like a military march, and 'Like infants' slumbers pure and light' shouted loudly enough to wake the sleepers of Ephesus.

Here are many Adverbs, and no fault to be found with them, except in one instance. The 'loudly' is pedantic; it should be *loud*.

The Verb.

Coming now to speak of the Verb, and still bearing in mind that what we are pursuing in this Chapter of Grammar is the Nature of words, I will call attention to an aspect of English verbs which is not always correctly apprehended even by men of the best education. I speak of the Subjunctive Mood. This is a matter of some delicacy and subtlety; it is one in which even Latin and Greek scholarship (whatever we might expect) does not always secure a writer against confusion. All teachers of Latin make much of the Subjunctive Mood;—

the best teachers insist upon the discovery of its inner Nature, and do not let their pupils idly refer it to the antecedent conjunction, or the visible dependency of one sentence upon another. Now this is exactly the kind of teaching which ought to prepare the learner to catch the subtler distinction of the Subjunctive in English. Yet so far is this from being the case, that the teachers themselves, even the best and most successful teachers of the learned languages, men who in Latin would blush at an error in Mood, are not to be depended upon for a correct distinction between the Indicative and the Subjunctive in English.

Of recent years there has existed in Birmingham a 'Grammatical Society' which dates, I believe, from the delivery of a Lecture by Prof. Sonnenschein of the Mason College in November 1885;—and I will here quote from a report of that Lecture which appeared in the *Journal of Education* for April 1, 1886.

> The lecturer also put in a plea for more vitality in the teaching of English, which ought to be made the gate to other languages. Many of the difficult questions of Latin syntax might be examined in the field of English, if only we were careful to treat our English critically. Whereas most grammars cut the ground from under them by denying the existence of a Subjunctive Mood. Until teachers recognised generally that, in such a sentence as 'if he had done it, it had been better,' we have a Subjunctive in both clauses, and a sentence essentially different from 'if he had loved her before, he now adored her,' English must forfeit half its value, both as a mental discipline and as a means of approach to Latin, Greek, and German. And from the point of view of English usage itself, a greater precision was necessary; one might search the ordinary grammars in vain for an authoritative statement as to the mood of *should* in 'he knew that he should have finished his letter by dinner time,' or the usage of the auxiliary (I knew that he *would*, &c.) The failure of grammars to define the usage of English led to great incorrectness, even in writers of distinction; thus, in Mark Pattison's sermons might be read the sentence, 'If there *was* nothing behind phenomena, here education might end'; and in Lamb, 'If it *were* presumption so to speculate, the present owner of the mansion had least reason to complain;' 'If my pen *treat* of you lightly, yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your customs.'

These examples might be multiplied with very little cost of observation. In the following example I can imagine a justification of the Subjunctive, but nevertheless it seems to me mistaken: '—for no one disputes that, if the writer were not the Apostle John, he was some one who wished to pass for him.'—G. Salmon, D.D., *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 75.

Another matter upon which there is some vacillation of practice, is that of Tense Attraction. There are a number of constructions in which a Preterite Verb in a governing clause induces the dependent clause to take a preterite by way of sympathy, without any appearance of a logical reason for it. In the following extract it would be hard to render a logical reason why the closing verb should be 'to have done' rather than 'to do.'

All the advantage this seasonable recruit brought them was to give their old men so much courage as to keep the field, which it was otherwise believed they would hardly have been persuaded to have done.—Clarendon, *History*, vi. 87.

It is upon this principle of Tense Attraction that the Preterite is used in reporting a speech which was originally delivered in the Present Tense. At the head of every such report a governing clause like 'He said' is supposed even where it is not expressed.

Do you remember Mr. Stallabras the poet?—Surely, they remembered Solomon.—*The Chaplain of the Fleet*, by Besant and Rice, Vol. ii. c. 10.

Here the first sentence is in dialogue, and is reported as the speaker said it; but the second sentence is in narrative, and it purports that the question was answered in the following manner:—'Surely, we remember Solomon.'

In the next quotation every *was* represents an *is* in the mouth of the speaker; every *were* an *are*; *performed, stood, attempted, sacrificed*, represent what in the living utterance was *perform, stands, attempts, sacrifice*.

Was it true that the legislative Chambers which were paid performed their duties more laboriously and conscientiously than the

British House of Commons? It was admitted in other countries that that House stood at the head of the representative assemblies of the world. What other assembly was there that attempted to transact such an amount of business? What assembly was there whose members sacrificed more of personal convenience and of health in the discharge of its duties? The condition of this country was peculiar. There was a vast leisured class to which there was nothing parallel on the face of the earth.—W. E. Gladstone, House of Commons, April 5, 1870.

There is such a thing as excess in this feature of Tense Attraction; and on this point I shall use almost exactly the words of Lindley Murray, who urges that it is not easy to give particular rules for the management of the moods and tenses of verbs, with respect to one another, so that they may be proper and consistent. The best rule that can be given is this general one, namely, To observe what the sense requires. It may, however, be of use to give a few examples of mistaken construction. We sometimes hear such a sentence as this, 'Last week I intended *to have written*': but this is wrong: for, at the time referred to, 'to write' was my purpose, and so it must be stated, when I bring back that time. It ought therefore to be, 'Last week I intended *to write*.' The following sentences are also erroneous: 'I cannot excuse the remissness of those whose business it should have been, to *have interposed* their good offices.' 'There were two circumstances which made it necessary for them to *have lost* no time.' It ought to be 'to interpose,' 'to lose.'

The Flexional Infinitive.

By a long-sustained observation which has become habitual to me, I am satisfied that confusion prevails in regard to the nature of words ending in *-ing*. One of the symptoms of an unsettled unconvinced state of mind upon an intricate or delicate subject, is this—that men catch hold of some phrase or technical term, which they resort to at every pinch, or indeed hardly ever leave hold of, but cling to it as they say a drowning man clings to a straw. And in regard to the matter now before us, the formula which acts as the

substitute for intelligence, is the phrase 'Verbal Noun.' If a word ends in *-ing*, and yet does not seem to discharge a participial function, we are usually told to call it a Verbal Noun. Under these conditions, it seems a desirable thing to ascertain and despatch this Verbal Noun. For I am not denying the existence of Verbal Nouns; I only protest that this formula has no right to exist as a sort of universal cold-harbour for the entertainment of every vagrant *-ing* that is destitute of other shelter. We will call forward and acknowledge this Verbal Noun fairly, we will give him his due, and that done, we will send him about his business. In the following sentence there are two Verbal Nouns, namely, *beginning* and *going*.

Our posthumous life, whatever there may be in it additional to our present, yet may not be entirely beginning anew, but going on.—Joseph Butler, *Analogy of Religion*, Part I. chap. 1.

In the following quotation we see a Verbal Noun in the word *petitioning*.

But quitting these somewhat abstract considerations, let History note this concrete reality which the streets of Paris exhibit, on Monday, February 25, 1793. Long before daylight that morning, these streets are noisy and angry. Petitioning enough there has been; a Convention often solicited.—Thomas Carlyle, *French Revolution*, III. iii. 1.

But when we see a non-participial *-ing* exercising the function of verbal government, it is not satisfactory then to rank it as a Verbal Noun. Unless indeed by a Verbal Noun were meant a Verb with the aspect of a Noun, and then the term is an abuse of technical terminology and becomes a source of confusion. For that is precisely what the Infinitive and the Gerund are—they are the point of coalescence between the Verb and the Noun, only the Verb remains a Verb, even while it is clothed with the nounal function. In the following quotation *transporting* is not a Noun, but a Verb; it may be called either Infinitive or Gerund.

When the stress of Valerian's persecution made it impossible for Christians to hold their meetings at the *Memoriæ* above ground,

a more secure place of resort was provided by transporting the apostolic relics to the concealment of the Catacombs.—G. Salmon, D.D., *Introduction N. T.* p. 549.

The following sentence affords a happy example, because it contains a string of phrasal verbs in the Infinitive Active with *to*, and then the same verbs in the flexional Infinitive Passive formed with *being* for auxiliary:—

We have not to yield, not to accept, not to enjoy, things which offer themselves for the very purpose apparently of being yielded to, accepted, enjoyed.—J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, ii.

With very small alteration we might give these Passives the ordinary phrasal form with *to*, thus: 'which offer themselves on purpose (apparently) to be yielded to, to be accepted, to be enjoyed.'

In the next example we have two flexional Infinitives, one Active and the other Passive:—

Is the being shewn over a place the same thing as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it?—Charles Lamb, *The Tombs in the Abbey.*

Another way of ascertaining the same fact is by observing translations. In the following sentence, Mr. M. Arnold has put the French *raison d'être* into English, and the French Infinitive has become the English 'existing':—

We say that the aim at setting forth certain Protestant doctrines purely and integrally is the main title on which Puritan churches rest their right of existing.—*The Cornhill Magazine*, February 1870, p. 180.

A particularly interesting aspect of this Infinitive is in certain old and set phrases like 'worth buying,' or 'worth thinking of,' or 'worth reading'; because these have a savour of antiquity, and they preserve the Active Voice where the general practice of the language has long ago run into the Passive. Such phrases say 'worthy to buy,' &c., meaning 'worthy to be bought.' So, 'this needs insisting on' (Newman, *Sermons*, iv. 1) is a survival from an earlier state of English Syntax. The modern usage puts it in the Passive, 'This needs to be insisted upon.'

But, in the next example, while *existing* and *imposing* are Participles, it is not possible to think of 'on casting' in any light but as a Gerund, and in the phrase 'despair essaying' the latter word is a direct and simple Infinitive, and it is no otherwise thinkable.

His list of the works in question will be found to be more complete than any existing. On casting one's eye along its columns, one might well despair essaying to write afresh on a subject so copiously treated, and under such imposing names.—Sir Alexander Grant, *Ethics of Aristotle*, vol. ii. p. xi.

Thus, besides participles and Verbal Nouns, there are words in *-ing* which are neither the one nor the other, but are either Verbs in the Infinitive Mood, or, where they have prepositions before them, are Gerunds. In these cases the *-ing* as truly represents the old infinitival termination *-an*, as *Abingdon* represents an earlier form *Abbandûn*.

Before dismissing this item, I must admit that instances do occur which are puzzling. In the following quotation I can without hesitation pronounce *lying* to be a Verbal Noun, and it would seem to follow that *averring* must be of the same nature. But the case is not clear. It has an Article like a noun, but it governs *what &c.* like a verb. Shall we think of *averring what* as if it were 'an averring of what &c.'? The passage is from Clarendon, *History*, iv. 123:—'which he thought a more mischievous kind of lying, than a positive averring what could be most easily contradicted.'

But it is in the Symbolic element that the finest subtleties of Grammar are found; the symbolic word is more elastic than is the presentive. The symbolic word is one which by itself cannot convey any impression to the mind; its function is relative, not to an object or even to an idea, but wholly relative to the process of discourse. This speaks for itself if we do but look for a moment at such words as *a, and, as, but, he, her, his, how, of, so, the, to, when, you, your*. To this category belong articles, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, a large section of adverbs, and that whole cloud of word-dust which is vaguely indicated by the term Particles.[1]

[1] For the more explicit evidence of this distinction I must refer the reader to my *English Philology*, c. 5.

Such words by themselves are meaningless; yet, strange to say, it is upon these that language depends for its fuller and richer and distincter faculty of expression. And these are the later development, they are the progressive element, it is on the evolution of these that the superior instrumentation of modern language depends. It has been observed by M. Michel Bréal that in this class of words language is most nearly allied to Art, for these words represent not things objective, but the attitude of the mind in regard to things and thoughts.[1] In the following example let the power of two little symbolic words be noted:

> So long as it was proposed to reward Sir Humphry Davy for '*the* invention of *his* safety-lamp' no objection could be taken; but when the subscription was described as a reward for '*his* invention of *the* safety-lamp' the case was altered, and Stephenson's friends proceeded to assert his claims.—*The Times*, September 9, 1857.

The Symbolic is that region of speech in which the progressive and improvable character of the human family makes itself felt: it is here that the work of refinement goes on slowly but continuously from age to age and from one stage of civilisation to another: here more than anywhere we are brought into the presence of the stored-up result of human intercourse through all the ages that are left behind since the very beginning.

We will enter upon our view of the symbolical Parts of Speech with the Article; and that for a natural and obvious reason, namely this: That there is no other Part of Speech that so strikingly illustrates the distinction between Presentive and Symbolic words, none so fit to stand as representative in chief of the whole Symbolic element, as is the Article, whether Definite or Indefinite. And this is as much as to say that the Articles are above all other Parts of Speech the flag-bearers of the modern development of English. What fine and yet full distinctions turn on the presence or absence of an Article. Consider the difference between 'Bodily exercise profiteth little' (1611), and 'Bodily exercise is profitable for a little' (1881).

[1] *Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 1887, p. 211.

By a most unaccountable perversity some contemporary grammar-makers have thought fit to ignore the Article, and to merge it in a more rudimentary stage of its own evolution. They who consider themselves advanced in grammatical knowledge beyond the doctrine of Lindley Murray, are found to reject the term Definite Article and to say in the room thereof either 'Demonstrative Pronoun' or 'Distinguishing Adjective.' Only let us for a moment imagine that anyone were to propose to the chief representatives of Greek learning (and better judges are hardly to be found) that they should drop the term 'Article,' and adopt in lieu of it 'Demonstrative Pronoun' or 'Distinguishing Adjective.' If such a change in terminology would be absurd for Greek Grammar, why is it less absurd for English Grammar? The analogy of the two cases is about as complete as it can possibly be. The Definite Article in Greek was a symbolism, which was extracted and refined out of a Demonstrative Pronoun, and the same is true of the Definite Article in English. The functions of the two run almost neck and neck; the English in this element jumps with the Greek even more than it does with the French, close as is the historical affinity of our Definite Article with that of the Romance Languages.

And our Article is not less rich in function than that of the Greek language, although no one has written an octavo volume on the English Article as Bishop Middleton did upon its Greek prototype. Almost every application of the Greek Article is found to have its English counterpart; even down to the prefixing of the Definite Article before the Infinitive Mood. Thus:

> Is the being shewn over a place the same as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it?—Charles Lamb, *The Tombs in the Abbey.*

An accomplished writer of English should have such an acquaintance with English Grammar, that he should know an Article when he sees it, whether Definite or Indefinite. And when I say know it, I mean, know it not merely by its outside, which is not really a safe index, but by its internal signification. It is not sufficient to know what the school-book

teaches, that the Definite Article is *the*, and the Indefinite Article is *a* or *an*. This knowing of Parts of Speech by the card is really no knowing of them at all. Such knowledge is not scientific knowledge, because it does not touch the cause, the root and essence of the matter; nor is it even practical knowledge; for the Articles cannot be safely recognized by their outward spelling. Not every 'a' is the Indefinite Article, and not every 'the' is the Definite Article.

I will quote a sentence from *Crotchet Castle*, by Thomas Love Peacock. 'I once flattered myself that in our estimate of these things we were nearly of a mind.' The word 'a' in this Sentence is not the Indefinite Article, it is a dwindled specimen of the pre-articular use of *ân* as a Numeral; and it means, but with a lighter touch, the same as 'of one mind.' The antithesis to two people being of a mind is felt when it is said of one person that he is 'of two minds.' In short, the word 'a' in this example is not our Indefinite Article, but the worn and trite specimen of an older thing; it is the phantom of a Numeral.

In the review of the life of John Bright in *The Times*, March 28, 1889, the following sentence is found.

> But nevertheless there was an openness and a degree of fair play about Mr. Bright's fighting which won him forgiveness in the end.

It would be a very poor sort of parsing which could see in 'an openness and a degree' two examples of the Article Indefinite. These are not Articles at all, they are Pronouns with the effect almost of Demonstratives, as is indicated by the fact that they stand as Antecedents to the Relative 'which.'

In the following quotation the word *an* or *a* is found five several times, but of these it is the Indefinite Article only three times. I leave it to the ingenuity of the reader to select these three, and to fix the grammatical character of the other two.

> If any but an eye-witness devised all these details so minute and so natural, we must credit him with a literary skill such as we nowhere else find employed in the manufacture of Apocryphal Gospels. But there remains to be mentioned a touch so subtle, that I

find it impossible to ascribe it to a forger's invention. Not a word is said as to the effect of what he had seen on the mind of Peter; but we are told that the other disciple went in and saw and believed.—G. Salmon, D.D., *Introd. New Test.* p. 329.

Coming now to the Article Definite, and its semblances, we may again quote the author of *Crotchet Castle*, who writes thus: 'The greater the quantity of labour that has gone to the production of the quantity of things in a community, the richer is the community:—that is your doctrine?' Now here in outward show we seem to have the same word 'the' in six different places, only then it is not the same word, but two really different words though they are written with the same series of alphabetic characters and though they are from one root;—two different words, whereof one occurs four times and the other twice. In four places it is the Definite Article; in the remaining two, it is the pre-articular Demonstrative Pronoun *that*, in its Ablative or Instrumental case. Is this a matter indifferent to the writer of English? At all events it would have to be discovered by the boy whose task it were to render it into Latin, for he could not let drop the two Ablatives as he could and must let drop the four Articles; and he could hardly do 'the greater . . . the richer' by any other than the ablative formula 'Quo major . . . eo locupletior.'

There are some current familiar phrases, in which this Instrumental Demonstrative is often in our mouths, as, 'I am none the wiser'; 'The more the merrier.'

In the next quotation, not only are there two examples of this Demonstrative, but there is also a subtle use of the Definite Article, where it does not refer, according to the common rule, to a foregone antecedent. In 'The teacher' there is no reference to any teacher before mentioned.

The teacher needs to understand and appreciate all the occupations of a school-boy's life, and therefore any acquirement or art that he can pursue will be of service. The more regularly and steadily he rows and plays cricket and football the better. If he can sing, or play, or draw, or paint, he ought to take advantage of the unrivalled opportunities afforded at the Universities for such pursuits. Above all, he ought to acquire with care *the art of ex-*

pression in writing and speech.[1]—J. J. Findlay, *Teaching as a Career for University Men*, p. 35.

But before leaving the Demonstrative 'the,' I add one quotation to stimulate the curiosity of the student and to exercise his parsing powers.

For in such universal panic of doubt, the opinion that is sure of itself, as the meagrest opinion may the soonest be, is the one to which all men will rally.—T. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, II. iii. 6.

Not only should the writer of English know an Article when he sees it, and that by some deeper evidence than the letters of its spelling; he should have, moreover, a well-matured appreciation of its powers and functions. The Article Indefinite has a remarkable power of declaring that the noun to which it is prefixed is a Common Noun, representing a class of objects with common attributes, or in the words of J. S. Mill, with a definite Connotation. And the demonstration of this power is most conspicuously seen when it is exercised upon that which is not a Common Noun; when a Proper Noun is for the nonce converted into a Common Noun, wholly and solely by the rhetorical force of a prefixed Indefinite Article. To understand what passes in the mind of him who intelligently reads the following quotation, we must recognize the fact, that the Proper Names 'Hildebrand' and 'Innocent' do not merely designate two several individuals, but are for the occasion transformed by the Indefinite Article into the subjective condition of *classes* invested with the personal attributes of those individuals.

At the end of the first century the Roman Church was swayed by the mild and peaceful counsels of the presbyter-bishop Clement; the close of the second century witnessed the autocratic pretensions of the haughty pope Victor, the prototype of a Hildebrand or an Innocent.—Dr. Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry*, p. 224.

It must continually be remembered that there is a procession which is made by words from one stage to another of Speech-part-ship. This procession is usually in the nature of an ascent, from the more to the less material, palpable, or

[1] The italics are the author's.

sensible; towards that which is remoter from the senses and more representative of mental operations. In recent pages we have seen this in two palmary instances. The Definite Article *the*, as a thing of the mind, surpasses the Demonstrative Pronoun *that* out of which it has been produced; in like manner the Indefinite Article *an* is less material and more symbolical than is the old Numeral *ân* one, from which it is an emanation. When such an elevation has happened to a word, the usage of the word will generally be found to run with main current into the newly created function; but while the new eclipses it does not extinguish the old function, which still lives on in comparative obscurity. Henceforward the word is of two Parts of Speech, or of two different grades of the Part to which it belongs; and these distinctions, though hardly ever uncertain or doubtful, are often fine and subtle and easily overlooked. And with those who learn the Parts of Speech by rote, the word in question will be labelled with its prevalent function, and the other will be forgotten; and the parsing which is taught under such a system will be but poor culture for the mind.

The scholar under such a hollow system will always promptly say that *they* is a Personal Pronoun, because such is its prevalent function in modern English. But it was developed out of a Demonstrative Pronoun, and whenever Parsing is used for exercise of thought and judgment, there will be a careful and constant discrimination between *they* the Personal, and *they* the Demonstrative. It is the Demonstrative where it stands as Antecedent to a Relative Pronoun, as in the following quotation:

> They alone are truly able to enjoy this world, who begin with the world unseen. They alone enjoy it, who have first abstained from it. They alone can truly feast, who have first fasted; they alone are able to use the world, who have learned not to abuse it; they alone inherit it, who take it as a shadow of the world to come, and who for that world to come relinquish it.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Vol. vi. Sermon 7.

And we have not exhausted the list of functions which are discharged by the symbol *they*. It is used in certain phrases

in place of the old impersonal pronoun *man* which still flourishes in German as an equivalent to the French *on*. As *men* (the plural) has also been sometimes employed in this function, we may suppose that *they* in 'They say' is a pronoun representing *men*. This may or may not be true, as a historical explanation of the impersonal use of *they*; but no explanation can reduce this function within the sphere of the function out of which it sprang; it is distinct and new, and should be recognized as such.

The Pronouns have a peculiar readiness for adaptation to new requirements; and it is a curious fact, that our prevalent Impersonal Pronoun of the Third Person (or what stands for such, as equivalent to French *on*) is a Pronoun of the Second Person, which, originally an Accusative Plural, has extended its area so as to represent also the Nominative, Singular as well as Plural. This is *you*, which is our most familiar Impersonal Pronoun, as seen in the following quotation from the Journal of Bishop Selwyn (New Zealand), a quotation which, if made longer than necessary for the illustration, I hope will not be too long to please the reader, the intelligent reader whom I desire to please.

As we approached Lopëvi, the mountain presented a grand appearance, with light misty clouds resting on the top of the great cone of cinders, which seemed as fresh as if the volcanic fire had but just gone out. The base of the mountain was fringed with bright foliage, resting upon the dark masses of the igneous rock, against which a thin line of sparkling surf was breaking gently, as each heave of the deep blue sea rolled in from without. At the sight of our boat the rocks swarmed with men and boys, jumping from mass to mass as we rowed along; and if we paused for a moment, throwing themselves into the sea to swim to the boat. At one place a large canoe was launched, but it was swamped immediately by the crowd which rushed into it. Knowing that our boat would soon be in the same plight, if we allowed any numbers of swimmers to approach us, we held on our course till we came to the west side of the island, where a smooth beach of dark sand offered a convenient landing-place. Most of our pursuers had been left behind; but there was still a considerable number ready to receive us, and among them an old man partially blind, who had persevered in following us for some distance, waving, as he went along, a branch

of a tree in token of friendship. With some trouble we made the rest of the party sit down on the beach, while the old man came into the water up to his knees, to meet Mr. Patteson and myself, when we left the boat with a hatchet to present to him. But the quiet of our interview was soon broken by one of those island bores (the counterparts of one or two members of every London club) who will not be denied. Every island has its bore; seldom more than one, for the creature is a kind of Phœnix in its nature, and cannot coexist with others of its own kind. He follows you everywhere; in vain you pull or sail a mile or two to shake him off; the moment the boat's head is turned to the shore, you see his disagreeable face among the foremost: you cannot give a present to anyone, but his hand is stretched out to snatch at it; you cannot ask a question about anything for the incessant clack of his voice raised to its highest pitch, and close to your ears. This is the bore as he is found in a state of nature; but if he should chance to have a Sydney education, then he becomes indeed insufferable. However, we gained our point in a great measure, and the old purblind chief was evidently pleased with our kindness; and the rule, which we hope to establish everywhere, was understood, and acted upon, by the crowd remaining quietly seated, while the chief men on both sides meet and hold friendly intercourse together. Where this can be done, all suspicion is removed. At this island, as at so many others, we found ourselves totally ignorant of the language.—*The Mission Field*, July 1858, Vol iii. No. 31, pp. 146, 147.

And here I am going to introduce under the head of Pronouns a delicate member of the language whose function has not, as I think, been rightly apprehended.

A subtle danger there is in connection with the word *party*; and it is one which can be provided against only by a sound grammatical habit of mind. In the first place it is necessary to know that there are in English two words, both spelt with the same letters *party*, but various in origin, and diverse in function. The most common of the two is that which signifies social or political divisions and bands of people, people grouped and banded in the way of separation and division, like opposite parties in politics. The signification of this word is made up of two elements, (1) division, (2) coalition, and in the various applications of the word, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other, is found to predominate. The idea of division (participle *partītus* of *partiri* divide, distribute) is the

etymological one, but as division among men is often associated in the closest manner with motives of combination, these two ideas of division and coalition, apparently but not really incompatible, jostle one another in the connotation of the word. This is, perhaps, enough upon a word with which we are not concerned, and the mention of which is introduced into this place only in order to clear the ground for the *party* in which we are really interested.

The *party* of which I propose to speak is derived from the Latin ablative *parte* as used in old legal contracts, between N. of the one part (unâ parte) and M. of the other part (alterâ parte). It is, in short, a variety of the noun *part*, and it differs in signification from that noun, only by the addition of the adversative relation. This 'party' is in fact a person on one side as over against a person on the other side. It is applicable to men, only when they are considered as in relation to or in transaction with other men. It has in fact no connotation but relativity; and relativity is as much the essence of this *party*, as it is of *he*, *she*, or *it*; of *this* or *that*. And here comes in the advantage of distinct grammatical ideas. No educated person will ever be in danger of confusing these two words, when he has once seized the idea that *party* in the sense of coalition is a Substantive, but that this more subtle and slippery *party* is essentially a Pronoun.

In our first example (which is taken from a circular letter of the year 1589, requiring loans of money to meet the expenses incurred in 1588, the year of the Armada) we have first a hypothetical 'person' and then that person is referred to as 'the party.'

> Wherefore, we require you to pay to our use the sume of Twenty Fyve Pounds to such person, as by our Lieutenant of that county shal be named to you by his hand wryting. And these our Lettres of Pryvy Seale subscribed by the party so named by our Lieutenant that shall receave the same, confessing the tyme of the Receipt thereof shalbe sufficient to bind us our heires and successors, duely to repay the said some &c.—*Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, Vol. i. p. 34.

> The cause of both parties shall come before the judges.—Exodus xxii. 9 (1611).

The privilege of speaking to your own ear certain matters of high import, and with which he judges it fit to intrust no third party. —W. Scott, *The Betrothed*, c. xi.

In every controversy it is always well to see what facts are undisputed which can be taken as common ground between the parties. —G. Salmon, D.D., *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 43.

Dean Alford says:—'The word *party* for a man is especially offensive. I once heard a venerable dignitary pointed out by a railway porter as "an old party in a shovel." Curious is the idea raised in one's mind by hearing of "a short party going over the bridge."'

Dean Alford's treatment of this curiosity of language is unsatisfactory, because he had not distinguished between the two words of one form, nor had he realized that the one is a Substantive and the other a Pronoun.

The great safeguard for correct use is to catch the grammatical character of the word. Any one whose grammar has risen above the lists of examples, any one who knows Parts of Speech not merely by catalogue but by penetration of mind, could never fall into the errors stigmatized by Dean Alford.

This symbolic character of subtlety may be further illustrated through the common and oft-recurring little word *but*. To those who have their Parts of Speech only by the card, *but* is just a Conjunction, and that is all they know about it. Yet perhaps it might be as well for any one whose artistic instrument the mother tongue is to be, if he had a more discriminative estimate of the value of these little words as they appear in the following quotation, where surely no clear-headed thinker would be content to call them conjunctions.

I have in my mind's eye a long row of suburban villas in the south-western district, very small and but semi-detached. . . . At the back of each runs a long narrow plot of ground, of precisely the same length and breadth in all cases, and originally presenting to the beholder but a patch of grass.—James Payn, *A Confidential Agent*, ch. i.

In these instances *but* is a covert Adverb, the relic of an adverbial phrase something like 'not anything but'—it is in fact the same thing as the 'nobbut' of the North of England, and it is equivalent to 'only' or 'merely.' It is now an

Adverb; and yet in the phrase of which it is a relic it was a Preposition; as it is a preposition if we say, 'Nothing but time can allay such grief'—*but* is a Preposition.

In the next quotation, *but* occurs twice, first as a condensed Adverb, and afterwards as a Conjunction.

Lord Lytton but expressed a common feeling when he declared in his well-known speech, that the noblest legacy to posterity would be, not our railways, docks, or public buildings, but a file of *The Times*.—*Cornhill Magazine*, Vol. xviii. (1868), p. 119.

2. Of Structural Usage.

The various syntactical combinations of words may be classed as follows:

a. The Phrase, i.e. a group of words having a simple grammatical function.

b. The Clause, i.e. any group of words that, having a concentrated grammatical value, is more than a Phrase and less than a Sentence.

c. The Sentence, i.e. a group of words, phrases, or clauses, which are brought into unity by the force of a dominant predication.

d. The Paragraph, i.e. a reasonable and compacted group of Sentences, forming either an independent whole, or a substantive member of a discourse.

a. To illustrate the definition here given of a Phrase, I may observe that this term cannot be applied to any chance series of words which may come together in a content, but only to such a series as exercises a grammatical function. In the sentence 'But and if that evil servant say in his heart &c.,' we cannot call 'but and' a phrase, nor can we call 'but and if that' a phrase; but we can justly call 'but and if' a phrase; because it is a grammatical unit, it is a Conjunction, a phrasal Conjunction, or, a conjunctional phrase.

As Words may be of every Part of Speech, so may Phrases; and the large development of Phrasal parsing is one of the salient characteristics of modern as against ancient diction.[1]

[1] Phrases of every Part of Speech may be found by reference to the Index of my *English Philology*, ed. 4; v. Phrasal. For substantival phrases, see § 425 § 565 and § 590.

So much may be said of the modern languages generally; but there is one special Phrase which we must notice as being peculiarly English. It is the substantival phrase which is constituted by the junction of two substantives, the first qualifying the second: as *the banker poet, Board School, County Council, field path, the Munroe doctrine, potato disease, stone bridge, summer fallow.* Such structures, which consist of two substantives combined by a relation of thought, have in German slidden into the state of Compounds; but in English the parts retain their several individuality, and remain in construction, so as to form phrases.

Next, we should observe that a phrase may stand in the place of the first member of such a substantival phrase; e.g. *The Representation of the People Act.* Here we see two substantives combined; the second being a simple word but the first a substantival phrase of five words. In the following quotation we see a whole Latin sentence figuring as the first of two substantives to compose a substantival phrase.

The Civis Romanus sum *doctrine.*

The *Civis Romanus sum* doctrine; the belief that, come what may, the honour and glory of Great Britain must be vindicated in the person of its meanest citizen, had obviously no acceptance with the Prime Minister who arranged the Transvaal Convention and the abandonment of Gordon and the Soudan.—*The Standard*, June 8, 1889.

And to proceed one step further: a substantival phrase may be compounded of two substantival phrases, as in the following example. In the *Guardian* of July 10, 1889, there is a letter from a clergyman who says: 'I am going out as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge chaplain to emigrants.'

Or, the first member may be made of a hyphenate many-worded compound, as,

Home-Rule-cum-Disestablishment programme.

Mr. Gladstone as the originator of the spiritual disintegration of the United Kingdom, would indeed be a curious figure in history, especially after that long and passionate resistance to the Divorce Act, which distinguished the close of the earlier portion of his career.

If he should succeed in this Home-Rule-cum-Disestablishment programme, he would, we believe, have done far more to reduce England to a medley of divergent purposes and ill-controlled civil impulses, than any of those secular-minded statesmen with whom during the first part of his career he was so vividly and justly contrasted.—*The Spectator*, June 15, 1889, p. 816.

But besides this grouping or coalescence of the substantive with a substantive used as an adjective, there is a further variety of nounal combination, namely, the grouping of a substantive with a qualifying phrase. Thus:

A thing of course.

He rose as a man awakes in the morning, when sleep flies from him as a thing of course.—J. H. Newman, *Paroch. Serm.* ii. 13.

And indeed there is hardly any limit to the variety of grouped combinations that can be made to discharge the function of the Substantive. This is one of those openings for the expatiation of fancy, in which whosoever indulges his whim, should first make a due estimate of his credit and reputation; for it is a liberty which is not permitted equally to all.

In-betweens.

She was so busy in admiring those soft blue eyes, in talking and listening, and forming all these schemes in the in-betweens, that the evening flew away at a very unusual rate.—Jane Austen, *Emma*, Vol i. ch. 3.

Would-have-beens.

But Mirabeau could not live another year, any more than he could live another thousand years. . . . The most important of men cannot stay; did the World's History depend on an hour, that hour is not to be given. Whereby, indeed, it comes that these same *would-have-beens* are mostly a vanity; and the World's History could never in the least be what it would, or might, or should, by any manner of potentiality, but simply and altogether what it *is*.—T. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, II. iii. 7.

Another phrase of a peculiarly English character, is that which is known as the Double Genitive. In some cases, we use both the Genitive termination and the preposition *of* at

the same time; as, 'This was a discovery of Sir Isaac Newton's.' Sometimes indeed, unless we throw the sentence into another form, this method is absolutely necessary, in order to avoid confusion; for the expressions, 'This picture of my friend,' and 'This picture of my friend's,' suggest very different ideas. The former indicates his portrait; the latter his property, being equal to 'This picture belonging to my friend.'

We may accept the judgment of Lindley Murray, when he lays it down that 'In a grave style, this double genitive is generally avoided.' But when he proceeds to deliver the doctrine following:—'Except to prevent ambiguity, it seems to be allowable only in cases which suppose the existence of a plurality of subjects of the same kind. In the expressions, "A subject of the emperor's"; "a sentiment of my brother's"; more than one subject, and one sentiment, are supposed to belong to the possessor'—here he is arbitrarily indulging a sort of grammarian's rationalism, and not reasoning inductively from his observation of actual usage.

The following sentence, by Richard Steele, contains a good example of the Double Genitive.

He was no less skilful in the knowledge of beauty; and, I dare say, there is no one who knew him well, but can repeat more well-turned compliments, as well as smart repartees, of Mr. Estcourt's, than of any other man in England.—*The Spectator*, No 20 (1712).

b. As to the term Clause, it may be useful to observe that this also, like the former, is a relative expression—relative, in this sense, that the Clause, though less than a given sentence (namely, the sentence it stands in), may nevertheless contain sentences within itself. Thus if I say 'He did the kindest things'—that is a Sentence. But if I say—'The pale and cadaverous banker poet, who said the bitterest and did the kindest things of any man in London'—this is only a Clause. It is more than the former sentence, which is contained within it, but it does not complete a proposition or act of predication. It is a clause, not with reference to that shorter sentence, but with reference to a larger sentence of which it constitutes a limb, and which runs thus:

The scheme of Mr. Clayden's book, which consists chiefly of letters to and from Rogers, does not give its readers much opportunity to form any very definite picture, physical or moral, of the pale and cadaverous banker poet, who said the bitterest and did the kindest things of any man in London.

There was an old-fashioned way of introducing an occasional Sentence in clause-form. I hardly know whether this is ever used now; if so, it is very rare. It is in conflict with the tendency of prose, its natural tendency to be explicit. For the matter, such a clause was to all intents and purposes a sentence, because the mind of the reader readily supplied all that was needed to make it so. But in form it was a clause. The following excerpt from Bishop Earle's character of 'A high-spirited man,' has this feature twice, in the sentences beginning with 'One.' The reader has only to supply 'He is' at the beginning of each, and this will complete their sentence-form.

Fortune may kill him but not deject him, nor make him fall into an humbler key than before, but he is now loftier than ever in his own defence; you shall hear him talk still after thousands, and he becomes it better than those that have it. One that is above the world and its drudgery, and cannot pull down his thoughts to the pelting businesses of life. He would sooner accept the gallows than a mean trade, or any thing that might disparage the height of man in him, and yet thinks no death comparably base to hanging neither. One that will do nothing upon command, though he would do it otherwise; and if ever he do evil, it is when he is dared to it. He is one that if fortune equal his work puts a luster in all preferment; but if otherwise he be too much crossed, turns desperately melancholy, and scorns mankind.—J. Earle, D.D., *Microcosmography*, ed. Bliss, 1811.

c. In approaching the grammatical structure of the Sentence we must distinguish between the nature of the Latin and that of the English sentence. The Latin sentence is an outgrowth of flectional conditions, and rejoices in that multiplicity of inward ramification for which Flexion ministers the spring; whereas the English sentence is for the most part simpler and shorter or else more concatenated; it works less by internal differentiation and more by external subdivision, less by collectedness

and concentration, more by expansion and serial development. Our early writers exhibit a mixture of these two types, the one being the fruit of their scholastic discipline, the other the gift of boon Nature. In the struggle for literary survival the native structure has grown and prevailed; while the Latin sentence, which in Hooker and Clarendon and Milton had the pre-eminence, has gradually waned in popularity and is now mostly reserved for special and occasional use. Rich and pregnant as the well-packed sentences of these learned authors often are, they are more fit to be admired than to be imitated by the modern student. A diluted and insipid product would be apt to result in modern composition if sentences like the following were taken for models.

Whereas on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time, and speak in favour of the present state, because thereby we either hold or seek preferment; but also to bear such exceptions as minds so averted before-hand usually take against that which they are loth should be poured into them.—R. Hooker, *Of the Laws*, I. i. 1.

Even after the ground has been cleared by the elimination of alien structures, we shall find no lack of diversity in the cast of the English sentence. Its varieties are indeed practically infinite, and yet they may be reduced for convenience of treatment to a very few types. Indefinitely as the composition of a sentence may be varied, there are three chief elementary forms to which all the varieties are reducible. It will help to mark the importance of the distinction, and it may also have a practical convenience as terminology, if we assign to these three types a several name in Latin as well as in English. They are:

1. Simplex or The Simple Sentence.
2. Composita or The Composite Sentence.
3. Evoluta or The Evolute Sentence.

I proceed to illustrate these three terms by a few examples of each norm.

1. The Simplex is in its purest form a Sentence which has only one Verb. Such are these:

a. Self-preservation is the first rule of every community.

b. Our whole system of government is by public meetings.

c. The absence of personal superiority enchants the democratic breast.

d. A Trade Mark may consist of a distinctive Device, Mark, Brand, Heading, Label, Ticket, or fancy word or words not in common use.

e. In the window of his mother's apartment lay Spenser's 'Fairy Queen.'—S. Johnson, *Cowley.*

It is possible by a cumulate subject, or by the enlargement of subject and predicate by participial and adverbial phrases, to give considerable amplification to the Simplex.

a. For somewhat more than four hundred years, the Roman Empire and the Christian Church, born into the world almost at the same moment, had been developing themselves side by side as two great rival powers, in deadly struggle for the possession of the human race.—C. Kingsley, *Hypatia,* Preface.

b. A tape round his chest, a sliding bar lowered on his head, a tap or two to ascertain his knee-jerk, a padded spring for him to hit, and a graduated jar for him to breathe into—these things, with a few skeins of Berlin wool and some samples of type on a wall, would speedily settle his place in nature to the complete satisfaction of science.—*The Times,* March 29, 1890.

The Simplex has been defined as the Sentence of one Verb. There is another way of characterizing it; we may call it the Sentence which has no Conjunction. These two definitions are correlative; for as the Conjunction is the link between Verbs, the Sentence of one Verb has no internal place for a Conjunction. If a Simplex has a Conjunction, it is not as a constituent part of itself, but as a link to preceding context; and such a Conjunction belongs, not to the structure of the Simplex, but to that of the Paragraph. On the contrary, the two subsequent types of sentence have Conjunctions as part of their nature, and it is upon the Conjunctions that we must fasten our attention, in order to distinguish the Composita from the Evoluta.

2. The Composita must have at least two Verbs, either expressed or understood, and these are co-ordinated by a Conjunction, most frequently *and* or *but, or* or *nor*; but also *though,*

yet, still. The essence however lies in co-ordination, whether with or without an expressed Conjunction. The Psalter is largely composed of sentences of this type. Thus: 'The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.' Psalm xxxvii. 30. The members run very much in couples, and are often antithetic.

a. He provides, and she dispenses; he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules her by authority, and she rules him by love; she ought by all means to please him, and he must by no means displease her.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

b. No two faces are alike, and yet very few faces deviate very widely from the common standard. Macaulay, *Madame D'Arblay.*

c. Art makes knowledge a means, but Science makes it an end.

d. The advice is the same, though the reason of it is different.—J. B. Mozley, *University Sermons*, x.

e. Dinner was late, but our guests were later.—Frank R. Stockton, *Rudder Grange*, p. 165.

A Composita of three members is a favourite type of sentence. The Psalter will afford us a ready pattern; thus—'Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.' Psalm lxxvii. 19. The first verse of the Fourth Gospel is a perfect example of this type.

f. The beginnings of sin are very attractive; all the pleasure and excitement are before us; the issue of it is hid, and in the background.—J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, ix.

g. The rich are poorer, but the poor are richer, and the aggregate opulence of the country is, on the whole, much greater.

When three verbs, that is, three sentences, are linked in one, the *and* is often omitted with the second, and used only with the third. Thus:

h. The church watcher brings her work with her, sits in a pew, and stitches.—(Harry Jones.)

This threefold Composita is not unusual with Carlyle in his more sober mood, although he has somewhere sneered at sentence-makers who are curious to make their sentences consist of three members.[1]

[1] Professor Minto, *A Manual of English Prose Literature*, p. 147.

We will dwell a little longer over the Composita, because it furnishes a large part of all that is written in English. Sometimes the Co-ordination is silently understood without the help of the co-ordinating Conjunction, as in the boast of Cæsar, 'I came, I saw, I conquered'—this is regarded as a sort of figure of Rhetoric, and is dignified with the Greek name of Asyndeton.

i. Life passes, riches fly away, popularity is fickle, the senses decay, the world changes, friends die. One alone is constant; One alone is true to us; One alone can be true; One alone can be all things to us; One alone can supply our needs; One alone can train us up to our full perfection; One alone can give a meaning to our complex and intricate nature; One alone can give us tune and harmony; One alone can form and possess us.—*Parochial and Plain Sermons*, by J. H. Newman, Vol. v. Serm. 22.

j. In 1830 America was intellectually a colony of England; Emerson's writings and speeches from 1836 to 1840 were the Declaration of Intellectual Independence.

Or, again, although a characteristic of the Composita is a plurality of verbs, yet it may be that the verb is expressed once only, and in the subsequent members is understood.

k. They never see any good in suffering virtue, nor any crime in prosperous usurpation.—E. Burke, *Reflections*.

l. Montaigne felt the attraction of truth, but none of its obligations.—Dean Church.

When the verb of several clustered sentences is expressed but once, it gives to the whole Composita somewhat the effect of a bunch of fruit depending from a single stem.

m. It is not the business of the Arts to worry the reason, but rather to stimulate the imagination, and soothe the feelings of mankind.—*The Standard*, June 6, 1887.

n. So to speak, God argues for His own being at the bar of reason in three parallel, correlated, and yet distinct lines—the first and highest, the argument of duty or the moral law; the second, the argument of design; the third, the argument of beauty.—Bishop Littlejohn, *Individualism*, p. 56.

Here we see three elliptical sentences dependent in a

clustered festoon from one common verb. Another form of the same is this:

o. Acting is a beautiful art, priceless to civilization in the solace it yields, the thought it generates, and the refinement it inspires.—*The Times*, October 19, 1888.

Sentences joined by *and* are not for the most part arbitrarily co-ordinated; there is often an internal relation which combines them more closely than if they were united by a merely mechanical *and*. I call it a mechanical *and* if I say: 'The lark is singing, and apples are a shilling a peck.' But sentences are seldom linked in this harum-scarum manner: the *and* has for the most part a reason behind it either inferential or causal, as, 'The water is naught, and the ground barren,' i.e. 'and consequently,' 2 Kings ii. 12:—'Bony went to St. Helena, and the ploughboys were sent back to the plough,' Mrs. Ewing, *Jackanapes*: i.e. 'and accordingly':—'He pays the piper and he calls the tune,' i.e. 'and therefore' he calls the tune.

And it is this tacit ratiocination which qualifies the Composita to fill so large a space as it does in argumentative discourse. It is the vehicle of implied, inexplicit, and condensed reasoning. Nor is this the whole account of the winged 'and' so subtly employed in the Composita. Besides its ratiocinative or inferential force, it has another function, which we may call remonstrative, or, more vaguely, rhetorical. This particular 'and' introduces not inference, not consequence, but contrast. It serves as a symbol for the exposure of inconsistency. As the 'and' noticed above is a short way of saying 'and therefore,' so this is a reserved expostulatory way of saying 'and yet.'

p. They know that the world is transitory, and they act as if it were eternal; they know eternal life is a truth, and they act as if it were a dream.—J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, viii.

3. Evoluta; the Evolute Sentence. As the essence of the last group is Co-ordination, so the essence of this type is Subordination. The dependent relation of the subordinate parts is indicated by Conjunctions which spring (mostly) from

Relative Pronouns, of which the chief and typical example is the Conjunction *that*. Many other Conjunctions serve to develop the Evolute sentence, *who, whose, whom, which, what, whereby, so that, such as, while, to*, &c., but they all carry the Relative character, and their foremost representative is the Conjunction *that*.

So—that—what.

a. He is so anxious to carry his point, that he cares not what point he carries.

That—by which—what.

b. People usually consider that an opinion by which no fee is earned is worth just what it cost.

That—if—as—which.

c. Englishmen are prepared to believe that if their country is to continue to be the greatest nation of the world, it must be as the centre of a naval confederacy which has its harbours in every sea.

That—who—of what.

d. We affirm, without hesitation, that he who has not read Martial has yet to learn of what the Latin language is capable.—*The Cornhill Magazine*, vol. xix. p. 446.

That—which—where—as much as.

e. This is like that madness upon flowers, which is somewhere prevalent, where they will give as much for one flower as would buy a good dwelling-house.—Archbishop Leighton, 1 Pet. i. 25.

Who—that—that—which—if.

f. Milton, who, in his letter to Hartlib, had declared, that to read Latin with an English mouth is as ill a hearing as Low French, required that Elwood should learn and practise the Italian pronunciation, which, he said, was necessary, if he would talk with foreigners.—S. Johnson, *Milton*.

Who—as—when.

g. The Catholic gentry, who had been painted as longing for the coming of the stranger, led their tenantry, when the stranger came, to the muster at Tilbury.—J. R. Green, *Short History of the English People*.

So—that—when.

h. Episcopacy is so inseparably interwoven with all the traditions and beliefs of men like Irenæus and Tertullian, that they betray no knowledge of a time when it was not.—Bishop Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry.*

That—in which—to—which.

i. His position as Conqueror, combined with that craft of the ruler in which none could rival him, enabled him to put the final seal to the work of Ecgberht, of Eadward, and of Æthelstan, to make England one united kingdom, which, since his days, no man has ever dreamed of dividing.—E. A. Freeman, *N. C.* vol. iv. p. 18.

So many—that—if not—that.

j. Baur has given students of early Church history so many new ideas, that they would have great cause to be grateful to him, if it were not that these ideas are for the most part wrong.—G. Salmon, *Intr. N. T.* p. 489.

To this norm belongs the formula of record used by public assemblies. For example:

k. At a meeting of the merchants, bankers, and others, held at the Mansion House on the 1st day of October, A.D. 1841, the Right Honorable the Lord Mayor in the chair, the following resolutions were agreed to, *videlicet*:

That this meeting desires to express in the most unqualified terms its sense of the indefatigable industry, perseverance, and ability, shown by the proprietors of *The Times* newspaper in the exposure made through the instrumentality of that journal of the most remarkable and extensively fraudulent conspiracy ever brought to light in the mercantile world.

That this meeting desires to offer its grateful acknowledgments to the proprietors of *The Times*, &c.

That the effect of such exposure is not only held useful . . . but also as showing the aid which a public spirited and independent journal has it in its power to afford in the detection and punishment of offences which aim at the destruction of all mercantile confidence and security.

That the Committee now appointed be empowered to take measures for the purpose of recording in a more permanent manner the sense of obligation conferred by the proprietors of *The Times* on the commercial community.—*Tablet in the Royal Exchange.*

Every one of these clauses beginning with That is a dependent member or apodosis of a complete and protracted sentence with a common protasis or leader: the whole may be called a clustered Evoluta.

And which (right).

To the Evoluta is incident that much-canvassed conjunctive formula 'and which,' as well as those kindred but less noticed combinations 'and what,' 'and where.' These conjunctional phrases are not to be condemned indiscriminately. In the following examples, we see them used, not only correctly, but even necessarily and unavoidably.

l. 'I am sorry,' remarks Lord Hartington, 'to say that of late years I have noticed that there seems to be a tendency on the part of some, at all events, of the Leaders of the Liberal Party to postpone useful and practical measures of legislation to subjects which are of a more sensational character—to subjects which have something of an aggressive character about them, and which enable one class or one portion of the community to obtain a triumph over some other class or some other portion of the community.'—*The Standard*, Nov. 26, 1888.

m. We know when and where he was born, where he went to school, where, after attaining manhood, he chiefly lived and worked, for the most part what poems and plays he wrote, whom he married, how many and what children he had, where he passed the closing years of his comparatively short life, where he died, and where he was buried.—*The Standard*, Dec. 12, 1888.

Sometimes the Evoluta has an inverted arrangement, the subordinate clauses standing first, with their Conjunctive symbols at their head; and the governing clause bringing up the rear. This arrangement assumes somewhat of a periodic cast, as in the following examples:

n. What the prayer here enjoined by St. Paul doth import, and how by it universally all sorts of devotion should be understood, we did formerly discourse.—Isaac Barrow, *The Duty of Prayer*.

o. Why it is, and what it is to issue in, and how it is what it is, and how we came to be introduced into it, and what is our destiny, are all mysteries.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Vol. vi. Sermon 7.

I am not sure that the term Evoluta is quite satisfactory, but anyhow it has this incidental advantage, that it conveniently suggests the nature of the 'involved' sentence, which is simply an Evoluta in a maze. The Conjunctions of the Relative family spring so easily to thought, that clause is apt to burgeon out of clause, till the sentence grows a thicket. The Involved sentence has clause within clause like a nest of boxes, and it results from the abuse of the facilities of the Evoluta. The Involved sentence is different from the Periodic, with which it is apt to be confused. And indeed they do sometimes, though rarely, get intermingled. In the following example there is something of the Involved and also something (as much almost as we ever get in English) of the Periodic.

Eusebius tells that Dionysius of Corinth relates that Dionysius the Areopagite, who was converted to the faith by Paul the Apostle, according to the account given in the Acts, was the first bishop of Athens.—G. Salmon, *Introduction to N. Test.* p. 368.

Webster's definition of the Involved sentence proves that it is not superfluous to insist upon its distinction from the Periodic. He defines Involution as 'the insertion of one or more clauses or members of a sentence between the subject and the verb, in a way that involves or complicates the construction, or a third intervening member within a second &c.' In this extract it is only the last clause, 'a third within a second,' that concerns the Involved sentence; the previous part being descriptive of the Periodic.

Thus we are led to speak of the Periodic sentence, for, little as it figures in English, the consideration of it is necessary if only as a contrast and a foil. The Periodic sentence is that wherein the secondary branches of the sentence are all enclosed, and, so to say, boxed between the nominative at the beginning and the verb at the close. This is the ancient, and apparently the original, cast of the Aryan sentence. It was found to have a confining effect and it has been gradually eliminated by the slow unobserved experience and practice of literature. The Evoluta is the outcome of this reaction. It was in Greek prose, so far as we can see, that this revolution was developed and consummated. The large retention of the

Periodic structure in Latin is perhaps the chief cause of that archaic manner which Latin, in comparison with Greek, is felt to have. There are still in modern languages sundry scattered relics of this periodic structure; but there is only one well-fenced stronghold wherein it rules and gives the law. This fortified retreat is in the interior parts of the German sentence, where every clause which is led forth by a Conjunction of the Relative family must be periodic. Even in English we may from time to time notice some old tenacious specimen dislodged or threatened with eviction. For example, in Matthew xx. 14, we have for three centuries heard 'Take that thine is'; but now the Revised Version of 1881 has rendered this periodic sentence in an evolute manner—'Take up that which is thine.'

A marked feature of Latin Syntax is the tendency to place the main verb at the end while the Nominative is at the beginning of the sentence, and so to enclose one or more subordinate sentences in the interval between. Thus Cæsar, 'Ambiorix in Aduaticos, qui erant eius regno finitimi, proficiscitur.' We cannot follow this order in English; we are not free to write, 'Ambiorix against the Aduatici, who were conterminous with his dominions, sets forth'; but we must put it thus, 'Ambiorix sets forth against the Aduatici, who were conterminous with his dominions.' And Cicero: 'Democritus, luminibus amissis, alba scilicet et atra discernere non poterat,' 'Democritus, when he had lost his eyesight, was naturally unable to tell the difference between white and black'; and not thus; 'Democritus, when he had lost his sight, the difference forsooth between white and black to discern was unable.'

On the general form of the Latin sentence I will quote two or three sentences from an unquestionable authority, namely, the *Public School Latin Grammar* by Dr. Kennedy.

> The end of the Sentence is occupied in general by the Verb, because this usually contains the main predication, and unites together the whole proposition. Such order is frequently observed throughout long paragraphs, as in Livy ix. 40, 41. (§ 242.)
>
> A Period is a compound Proposition, consisting of at least two, generally of several, sentences, which are so connected, that the

grammatical construction is not complete before the last clause is added.

A Period (*ambitus* or *circuitus verborum*) is so called because the main proposition surrounds the interpolated clauses. (§ 244.)

Rarely it happens that we see an example of this construction in English, and when we do it is mostly a very slight one. Thus—'Here then the advantage of the free and unanxious state of mind recommended in the text comes in.' J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, iv. According to ordinary English usage it would rather be thus:—'Here then comes in the advantage of the free and unanxious state of mind recommended in the text.'

I have been the more careful to quote the high authority of Dr. Kennedy on this point, because it is not at all rare to see the expression 'periodic sentence' employed in a very different sense. Only lately in the comments of one of our best literary editors I have been struck with such phraseology as the following: 'the obscurity to which Elizabethan prose, with its periodic structure, was signally liable.' And again: 'Milton is the last great writer in the old periodic style.' In such connection the term 'periodic' is vague and inexact. It only means a style which uses long periods, that is, prolonged sentences. And such sentences are mostly of the Evolute or the Mixed Type. In the proper technical sense of Periodic as put forth by Dr. Kennedy, our English diction has never been periodic, at least not since the tenth century.

It is into our legal diction that we must look if we would find examples of the periodic sentence in English;—thus, in a conveyance (to be given in full below, Chapter xii.) anno 1525, we find this:—'And we the said Prior and Convent and our Successours shall the said pastures during the said term to the said Richard Margaret Jeffrey and William in manner and form above expressed against all people warrant acquit and defend.'

In English literature this 'periodic' feature of enclosing the sentence with all its ramifications between the Nominative at the opening and the Verb at the close, never held the place which it has in German literature, where this construction has been so largely retained as to constitute the most salient

characteristic of German prose. Mr. M. Arnold quotes from 'Dr. Wiese, in his recent useful work on English schools,' the following sentence as a sample of the manner in which a German sentence is framed;—'Die Engländer einer grossen, in allen Erdtheilen eine Achtunggebietende Stellung einnehmenden Nation angehören.'—*Mixed Essays*, p. 282.

The meaning of Dr. Wiese would run thus in Evoluta form:—'The English belong to a great nation, and one which in every part of the world takes a position that commands respect.' But the periodic order of the German is thus: 'The English to a great, in every part of the world respect-commanding-position-taking nation belong.' In German prose this construction is no longer usual in the main sentence; but in the dependent sentences it is the rule; and this it is (more than anything else) that keeps German diction back from freedom and elasticity. Indeed, there are some important points of analogy between the condition of English legal diction and that of German literary prose.

Mixed Sentences.

We rest then upon this fundamental position, that the ultimate types of our Compound sentences are mainly found in these two norms, the Composita and the Evoluta.

The reader must not expect to find pure examples of the above types ready to hand in every page, nor will he be justified in concluding that therefore the types themselves are imaginary and unreal. It is essential to freedom and elasticity and beauty of discourse, that there should be no obtrusive persistence of rigid types;—but at the same time it is useful for us to observe or by analytic process to disengage such types, because they are the elementary factors of an endless variety. Practically, that is, in most written sentences, these types are commingled.

1. A very common cast of sentence is formed by a mixture of Composita and Evoluta, in which the bulk is Composita, with a touch of Evoluta at the close. The most frequent manner of development is for an evolute process to spring out of the last member of the Composita.

a. The author is profuse in his acknowledgments to previous writers, but he says not a word about the book from which he has drawn his best ideas.

b. The Colonies have been invited to join the Mother Country in a species of naval partnership, and they have readily responded to the invitation, with the result that a scheme has been matured—subject to the approval of the Parliaments of the Colonies concerned—which will place one-fourth of Her Majesty's Colonies and the Mother Country in a very different position from that which they have hitherto occupied so far as naval defences are concerned. —*The Times*, May 3, 1887.

c. Tea, cocoa, and coffee are being consumed in larger quantities than ever before, and the taste for them is growing steadily; but they have not succeeded in ousting the liquid which is to the Teutonic nations what wine is to the people of the South.

d. No sudden burst of undisciplined valour, no nervous enthusiasm weakened the stability of their order; their flashing eyes were bent on the dark columns in their front, their measured tread shook the ground, their dreadful volleys swept away the head of every formation, their deafening shouts overpowered the dissonant cries that broke from all parts of the tumultuous crowd, as slowly, and with a horrid carnage, it was pushed by the incessant vigour of the attack to the farthest edge of the height.—Napier, *Albuera.*

e. Dr. Arnold's most fatal error in dealing with the young was his insistence upon the duty of moral thoughtfulness; and the self-scrutinizing habit was formed in the son before he was strong enough to support the weary burden of himself.—*Edinburgh Review*, October 1888, 'The Poetry of Matthew Arnold.'

f. Law accumulates rule upon rule, but can never overtake the multitudinous variations which spring from our personal relationships.—Henry Wace, *Boyle Lectures for* 1874, Lecture iii.

2. Another combination is that in which the outer frame or shell is Composita, while some or all of the constituent members have the internal conditions of Evoluta.

a. We go with the historian as he goes, and stop with him where he stops.—S. Johnson, *Cowley.*

b. There is a sense in which we are to take thought for ourselves, but there is also a sense in which we are not to do so.—J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, vii. p. 81.

c. The connection of Peter with Rome has been so much insisted on by Roman Catholics that Protestants have thought it a duty to deny it; and thus there is a certain number of commentators whose

views have been so biased, one way or other, by the effect their decision may have on modern controversies, that their opinion deserves to go for nothing.—George Salmon, D.D., *Introduction to the New Testament* (1885), p. 546.

d. His face had that peculiar smile which is the special distinction of elevated and unselfish natures; and in conferring favours he invariably would so demean himself that he seemed to be receiving them.—*The Standard*, June 16, 1888.

e. Thirty-five years ago an Englishman who wore a beard was regarded as a coxcomb or a lunatic; he had little chance of obtaining any post; and the Bank of England issued a witty notice to its clerks that moustaches were 'not to be worn during office hours.' —*The Daily Telegraph*, December 14, 1888.

f. Indomitable self-confidence is the secret by which nations, like individuals, impose themselves on mankind; and it is not to be controverted or challenged that the French nation possesses this invaluable quality beyond any other race on the face of the globe. —*The Standard*, May 3, 1889.

g. The Archbishop of Canterbury reminded their Lordships that the natives of Africa were like children of strong passions and with little self-control, and quoted, with much force, remonstrances which had been made by chiefs against the drink traffic.—*The Record*, May 10, 1889.

Or, the more directly categorical parts of the sentence may be Composita, and the out-jutting conditions of time, place, circumstance, may be of the Evoluta type.

h. In this way, during the historical blank which extends over half a century after the fall of Jerusalem, episcopacy was established and the Catholic Church consolidated.—Bp. Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry*.

Here it may be convenient to add a remark upon the difference, which is sometimes practically important, between the repetition and the ellipse of the auxiliary in the branches of a Composita. If, in this example, the 'was' had been repeated thus—'and the Catholic Church was consolidated,' the effect would have been different. As it stands, with the ellipse of the second 'was,' it better represents the identification (apparently intended by the writer) of these two things, the establishment of episcopacy and the consolidation of the Catholic Church.

3. A third mixture is that in which the sentence casts off as an Evoluta, and then subdivides into a bunch of parallel members, producing the effect of Composita, except for that evolute dependence which is indicated by the repetition of the conjunction *that*.

a. It was vehemently urged that this mode of conveyance would be fatal to the breed of horses and to the noble art of horsemanship; that the Thames, which had long been an important nursery of seamen, would cease to be the chief thoroughfare from London up to Windsor and down to Gravesend; that saddlers and spurriers would be ruined by hundreds; that numerous inns, at which mounted travellers had been in the habit of stopping, would be deserted, and would no longer pay any rent; that the new carriages were too hot in summer and too cold in winter; that the passengers were grievously annoyed by invalids and crying children; that the coach sometimes reached the inn so late that it was impossible to get supper, and sometimes started so early that it was impossible to get breakfast.—T. B. Macaulay, *History*, c. iii.

b. This seems conclusive against the theory that there cannot be trade between Canada and the United States because their products are the same, and that, as it is somewhat fancifully put, trade must follow lines of longitude, not lines of latitude.—Goldwin Smith, Letter in *The Times*, March 23, 1889.

c. The case of the Christian is not that the evidence ought not to be explained naturally and translated into everyday experience, but that it cannot be.—Dr. Wace in *Nineteenth Century*, May 1889.

4. Lastly, there is a type of Mixed Sentence of which the frame is the Simplex, and which is so frequent as almost to deserve a particular sub-name. I can think of nothing better than by a sort of oxymōron to call it Simplex Duplex, or briefly Duplex. In this type the frame is Simplex, but the subject is manifold and elaborate with Evolute processes. Thus:

a. The optimists who said that we should open a 'career' to young geniuses from the plough and the workshop, and the alarmists who said that 'gentlemen' would no longer be found in the public services, were both wrong.—*The Standard*, July 19, 1889.

b. The figures which he gives from actual observation, the contrast which he draws between the trifling, unremunerative prices received by the farmer and the veritable famine prices paid by the

poor, form a curious commentary on the supposed perfection of our system of distribution.—*The Times*, April 4, 1890.

d. The Paragraph.

The triumph of modern Art in Writing is manifested in the structure of the Paragraph. The glory of Latin composition must be looked for in the great sentence which occasionally recurs; the glory of French or English composition lies in the subtle combination of sentences which makes the Paragraph. The secret of Macaulay's charm lies, not, as has been imagined, in his pointed antithesis, or in his balanced periods (for these, if they have their attraction, have also undoubtedly their elements of repulsion), but in his masterly command of the Paragraph.

The Paragraph consists of an irregular but skilful variety of sentences, Simplex, Composita, Evoluta, Mixed, as is indicated by the marginal signatures of the annexed example.

The most important event of this short administration was the	S
trial of Byng. On that subject public opinion is still divided. We	SS
think the punishment of the Admiral altogether unjust and absurd.	
Treachery, cowardice, ignorance amounting to what lawyers have	M
called *crassa ignorantia*, are fit objects of severe penal inflictions.	
But Byng was not found guilty of treachery, of cowardice, or of	C
gross ignorance of his profession. He died for doing what the	E
most loyal subject, the most intrepid warrior, the most experienced	
seaman, might have done. He died for an error in judgment, an	M
error such as the greatest commanders, Frederic, Napoleon, Wel-	
lington, have often committed, and have often acknowledged.	
Such errors are not proper objects of punishment, for this reason,	E
that the punishing of such errors tends not to prevent them, but to	
produce them. The dread of an ignominious death may stimulate	M
sluggishness to exertion, may keep a traitor to his standard, may	
prevent a coward from running away: but it has no tendency to	
bring out those qualities which enable men to form prompt and	
judicious decisions in great emergencies. The best marksman may	E
be expected to fail when the apple which is to be his mark is set on	
his child's head. We cannot conceive anything more likely to	E
deprive an officer of his self-possession at the time when he most	
needs it than the knowledge that, if the judgment of his superiors	
should not agree with his, he will be executed with every circum-	

E stance of shame. Queens, it has often been said, run far greater
risk in childbed than private women, merely because their medical
M attendants are more anxious. The surgeon who attended Marie
M Louise was altogether unnerved by his emotions. 'Compose your-
self,' said Bonaparte; 'imagine that you are assisting a poor girl
E in the Faubourg St.-Antoine.' This was surely a far wiser course
than that of the Eastern king in the Arabian Nights' Entertain-
ments, who proclaimed that the physicians who failed to cure his
M daughter should have their heads chopped off. Bonaparte knew
mankind well; and, as he acted towards this surgeon, he acted
M towards his officers. No sovereign was ever so indulgent to mere
errors of judgment: and it is certain that no sovereign ever had
in his service so many military men fit for the highest commands.
—Macaulay's *Essays*, 'The Earl of Chatham.'

S The Lives of the Poets are, on the whole, the best of Johnson's
SS works. The narratives are as entertaining as any novel. The
remarks on life and on human nature are eminently shrewd and
M profound. The criticisms are often excellent, and, even when
M grossly and provokingly unjust, well deserve to be studied. For,
C however erroneous they may be, they are never silly. They are
the judgments of a mind trammelled by prejudice and deficient in
M sensibility, but vigorous and acute. They, therefore, generally
contain a portion of valuable truth which deserves to be separated
from the alloy: and, at the very worst, they mean something,
a praise to which much of what is called criticism in our time has
no pretensions.—Macaulay, *Life of Johnson*.

The following exhibits this variety of sentence in a short but entire paragraph which closes a leading article in *The Times*, April 2, 1889.

S The analogy and experience of municipal institutions warrant
E us in hoping the best for the new Councils. Where municipal in-
stitutions are active and healthy they bind all classes together, and
create a spirit of local patriotism which within due bounds is
C eminently salutary and beneficial. The rural districts have hitherto
been without this sense of local unity and solidarity, and this was
perhaps the capital and only serious defect of the system of rural
C government now superseded. That system was admirable in its
practical results; it was economical, efficient, and absolutely free
S from the faintest suspicion of corruption. But it left the main body
of the rural population outside the pale of ordinary citizenship.
E The evil was partially remedied when the Parliamentary franchise

was conferred on the rural householder, and as soon as that was done the reform of local government obviously became a mere question of time and opportunity. If we were a logical people, we E
should perhaps have inverted the order, and have proved the capacity of the rural voter in the management of his own local affairs before summoning him to take his share in the control of Imperial concerns. But, however that may be, the rural population M
is now invested with the full rights of citizenship, and the future of the country depends on the wisdom, capacity, and integrity with which those rights are exercised.

A paragraph must consist of three or four sentences at the least; less than three can hardly be called a paragraph.

But the Civil Service Commissioners can point to the fact that E
the efficiency of the public services has certainly not diminished during the last thirty years, either at home or in India. Nothing, E
indeed, is more curious, and on the whole more satisfactory, than the comparatively small social change wrought by the adoption of the system of competition. The optimists who said that we should D
open a 'career' to young geniuses from the plough and the workshop, and the alarmists who said that 'gentlemen' would no longer be found in the public services, were both wrong. The sons and M
grandsons of the men who put down the Mutiny and fought in the Crimea are still ruling India and drilling our soldiers.—*The Standard*, July 19, 1889.

3. Logical Analysis of Sentences.

The ultimate outgoings of Grammar are in certain elementary fringes of Logic, and one illustration of this fact may be seen in the tendency of educational effort towards an expansion of Grammar in the Analysis of Sentences. This tendency reflects a useful light upon the essential nature of Grammar itself, and serves as one among many indications to demonstrate that Grammar is essentially an analysis of mental operations. This it is in all its stages, from the most elementary lessons in the Parts of Speech, to its larger expatiations on the confines of Logic. The true nature of grammatical discipline may indeed be masked and obscured by a mechanical system of teaching, like that which makes the Parts of Speech to be learned by the card, and this corruption of the natural excellence of the study applies

equally to the highest as to the lowest divisions of the subject. It is quite possible to teach the Analysis of Sentences in such a formal and mechanical way as entirely to baffle the intention of the study, and to mystify the learner's mind instead of enlightening it.

The superficial token which indicates that the study has passed through a transition into a new phase of development is the substitution of the term 'Predicate' in place of the term 'Verb.' In analysis which is strictly grammatical everything revolves around the Verb, but when the mind assumes a logical attitude, the idea of 'Predicate' becomes dominant, and that of Verb is swallowed up in it. The denotation of these two terms is indeed often coincident; it often happens that the Predicate is the Verb, and the Verb is the Predicate; and naturally so, because the Verb is the chief instrument of predication. Nevertheless, there is an important difference between the terms:—'Verb' expresses a grammatical conception; 'Predicate' expresses a logical conception. And although the two conceptions do constantly meet upon the same word, yet they are not always coextensive, they may meet without coinciding, as when the Verb represents but a part of the Predicate, a case which is very common in the higher and larger developments of speech.

But to take an example:—'An impression once created is with difficulty removed.' The analysis of this sentence as mechanically taught, or rather mis-taught, would be this:

Subject: An impression once created
{Copula: is
{Predicate: with difficulty removed.

Some books merge the Copula in the Predicate, and that is the better practice; and on this scheme the Predicate would be: 'is with difficulty removed.'

This is mechanical, and carries the student no further than he was before. It certainly causes him to use the new term Predicate, but it hardly gives him any light on the force and intention of that term. The benefit of Analysis as a discipline of the mind turns upon the discovery of the true focus of predication, and this it is that the student should be encouraged to investigate. In the present example the

adverbial phrase 'with difficulty' is the centre and focus of the predication, and it would be the aim of a really educating exercise to make the student bring this out by a recasting of the scheme of the sentence, somewhat thus:

'The removal of an impression once created | is a matter of difficulty.'

In fact the exercises called Analysis of Sentences should adopt as their most elementary aim the reduction of the literary sentence to the rigid logical skeleton-form in which it exhibits the several parts in their relation to a Syllogism. They should enucleate the true Subject and set it off against the true Predicate.

By the exigencies of literature many a proposition is cast in a reverse order to that of its logical diagram, a fact which will be intelligible enough to any who has once realized that in order to be readable it is a matter of the first necessity to avoid uniformity and monotony. The following passage will afford a good example of this pleasing contortion. It is taken from a Leader in *The Standard* of May 14, 1889, on the occasion of the rejoicings in Holland for the wonderful recovery of the king's health.

The Reign of William III. began in 1849, a date which cannot be mentioned without recalling to men's minds a dark and troubled period. But, as the King says in the Proclamation we have cited, he and his people have stuck to each other for forty years, through good and evil report. Perhaps a mercilessly accurate historian would have to point out that, in some respects, the Royal House, in the case of more than one of its members, has on certain occasions put the loyalty and regard of the Dutch people to a severe test. But political wisdom is a distinguishing characteristic of the inhabitants of the Low Countries; and they have never been so foolish as to subordinate regard for the well-being of the State to disapproval of the acts of individuals in their semi-private capacity.

From this extract we will take the proposition—'Political wisdom is a distinguishing characteristic of the inhabitants of the Low Countries'—and observe that 'political wisdom,' which, by its placement might be taken for the subject, and which, grammatically, *is* the subject of the sentence, is not in a logical sense the subject but the predicate or a part of the

predicate. The intention in the mind of the author is to predicate something, not about political wisdom, but about the Dutch—of whom he asserts this, that 'The Dutch have political wisdom to such an extent as forms a distinguishing feature of their national character.'

The following example, though easier than the foregoing, contains some educational material in it. For it should be observed that the predicate is despatched after the first hint of the subject, and then follows the completion of the subject by its relative qualifications. I speak only of the dependent sentence, which indeed contains the main purpose of the writer. In this sentence, the subject is—'the view which regards prophecy as a kind of sacred song of which the melody only need be attended to, the words to which the air is set being quite unimportant'; and the predicate is contained in the words 'is quite modern.'

Now I feel myself safe in saying that the view is quite modern which regards prophecy as a kind of sacred song of which the melody only need be attended to, the words to which the air is set being quite unimportant.—G. Salmon, D. D., *Introd. New Test.* p. 296.

There is a class of propositions that can be inverted, can be stated inversely, the subject and predicate changing places. 'The Macedonian conqueror of Asia was Alexander'—'Man is the reasoning animal'—such as these can be inverted so far as truth is concerned, but not without some change in the point of the assertion. I can say 'Alexander was the Macedonian conqueror of Asia'—'The reasoning animal is man.' But the proposition so turned round, though equally true, is not identical, the thing asserted is transposed, the relation of the terms is changed. I will not pause to discuss stock examples like the above; but we may take a proposition richer in thought, and try to apprehend the difference between subject and predicate. 'Every law of God is a law of reason, and every law of reason is a law of God.'[1] Here the author himself (the Dean of St. Paul's) states his proposition in both ways, transposing subject with predicate. He teaches us

[1] *Hooker, Book I.*, by R. W. Church (1876), Introduction, p. xviii.

thereby that both propositions are equally true, but he implies that they are not identical, for if they were, why affirm them both? A moment's attention will shew us that the first formula belongs to the vindication of reason, and the second to the vindication of the supremacy of God. In the one turn we predicate, assert, maintain, the law of reason; and in the other turn we maintain, and assert, and therefore predicate, the law of God.

The practice of trying to find the predicate is excellent for opening the mind, and this is the best part of the grammatical exercise which is known as Analysis of Sentences. But in order to make this exercise sound and fruitful, the sentence to be analyzed should (in some instances at least) be presented with some portion of context, in order that the student may see what was the train of thought in the writer's mind. In the following sentences, I am not sure that it will appear to the reader that I have rightly analyzed them, but I think I should have him with me if he saw them in their context. And for this reason I have annexed the references.

Questions of taste cannot be settled by disputation.—G. Salmon *Introd. N. Test.* p. 487.

Here the relation of the terms may be open to question, but I think the true logical subject is Disputation, and I understand the predication as follows: Disputation | is not the right method for settling questions of taste.

Sometimes the predicate may lurk in an inconspicuous adverb. But where this is the case, such word though to the eye inconspicuous must certainly be prominent to the ear.

Controversies soon die out in the face of accomplished facts.—*Id.*

The predicate is couched in that modest little adverb 'soon.' The logical form is, 'The death of controversies that are practically settled | is rapid.'

But the aim which I have here in view is something beyond the Analysis of Sentences. The use of this latter exercise is to open more fully what it is the sentence means, to awaken the student's mind to the subtle shades of distinction

that are intimated by slight differences of form. But, as I said, I have another aim beyond, and one which more peculiarly belongs to the purpose of this treatise. This is, by reducing the sentence to its rigid logical skeleton, to display as by a foil the various devices of art, and to exhibit the contrast between logical diagram and literary expression. As a rule the logical form is a dry skeleton which calls for the genial enfoldings of kindly and voluble diction. But it is part of the endless variety of literary diction, that even the strict logical form is at times adopted, and that too with something of a striking effect. Mr. Goldwin Smith wrote thus in the *Contemporary Review*.

Flinging epithets at Cromwell is a very harmless indulgence of sentiment.

Now, the usual literary manner of saying this would be in the inverse order, by putting the predicate first, thus :—'It is a very harmless indulgence of sentiment to fling epithets at Cromwell.' Thus we see that a certain effect is gained by departing from literary conventionality and adopting the logical order of subject and predicate.

This, however, only goes to show that in literature there is nothing rigid, nothing inflexible; no rule is without an exception—that in the perfect freedom of diction is the life of literature. And over this Protean diversity of outline the mind obtains a mastery by reducing all to a few grammatical norms, or to one logical formula.

CHAPTER III

SOME MECHANICAL APPLIANCES

The nature of Mechanical signs—Apostrophe—Capitals—Diærésis—Double Dash—Elision—Hyphen—Inverted Commas—Parenthesis—Punctuation—Single Dash—Square Brackets.

UNDER this title I propose to consider the punctuation and other illustrative marks which are used in written literature to indicate certain grammatical relations of larger sweep. Here the term Mechanical expresses not an absolute but only a relative character. For it is obvious that these marks are not absolutely and merely mechanical, being as they are in the closest sympathy with the mind and meaning of the composition, towards the full understanding of which they act as supplementary exponents.

The term may however be justified by the observation that these marks belong not at all to spoken but only to written discourse. That which they indicate is indicated in living speech by other means, namely by the modulation of the voice in time, tone, and cadence. As being incident then to writing only, which is the mechanical representation of speech; and as being contrasted with the modulation, that most vital element of speech which writing is powerless to render, these accessory indications may not unfitly be characterized as mechanical. In the simple sentence their service is hardly required, but in sustained structures of any compass and complexity, they are a useful guard against confusion and collapse. They belong to the higher region of Grammar, if its province has been rightly defined as comprising the structure and articulation of thought.

I have chosen this term as being bold and distinct; not as intending thereby to diminish the value of these *adminicula*,

indeed have a very honourable function. They are in nature of a rudimentary musical notation, and it should be one of the aims of the teacher of Grammar to make the student render them justice in the exercise of reading aloud. In this more than in any other aspect is seen the triumph of good reading, when this notation is worthily animated by the voice of the reader.

In the foregoing chapters we have looked at our subject under different aspects, each of which bears a relation to thought in its own peculiar manner. The new aspect which we are now approaching will be found to share in the work of illustrating thought. While we seem to be but contemplating some irregularly interspersed marks over a printed surface of paper and ink, we shall be drawn into sympathy with the movement of the mind in larger circuits than heretofore.

Closely connected with the disuse of Flexion which had a great cementing power, and also with that great literary movement (described above in the Chapter on Grammar) by which the focus of eloquence was transferred from the sentence to the paragraph, is the introduction of mechanical contrivances, unknown to the elder world, as indications of structure, transition, and other relations between the constituent parts of the discourse.

The literary evolution of language is of such universal extension, that it has left to the oral what may seem but a petty field by comparison. Yet the oral is the source and parent of all that is developed in the literary.

The art of writing is ever seeking by imitation to overtake that power of expression which is exhibited in living speech. And if to this end it introduces extraneous and supernumerary mechanical signs, this also is an act of imitation, for living speech, unsatisfied with its own intrinsic forces, does the same. Demosthenes when asked what was the first qualification for an orator is said to have answered 'Action.' When asked for the second he gave the same answer, and so also for the third: Action, Action, Action.

Speech is ever accompanied by mechanical movements which add something to the words uttered, and these move-

ments are of sufficient importance to have called into existence the profession of the actor.

It would have been impossible to guess from Mr. Tremenhere's face that the suspicion of this very thing had already occurred to him, and *that* not an hour ago; but he nodded and jerked his hand out in a manner that informed Mrs. Linden, who had studied his sign language to some purpose, that what she had said to him had had its weight, and would be attended to.—James Payn, *The Burnt Million* (*Cornhill Mag.* July 1889, p. 25).

Enough has been said to indicate that these mechanical signs are a very important power in all literature whether of prose or verse, and without a review of them our sketch of the elements of English Prose would be incomplete. It seems the most convenient plan to make a catalogue of these marks in Alphabetical order.

Apostrophe.—This term is pronounced with four syllables, just like *Apostrophê* the rhetorical figure, but in fact it is a different word, and ought to be sounded differently. It is from the adjective *ἀπόστροφος*, which has both the active sense of turning away, shunning; and also the passive sense of turned away, averted. The Germans write it *Apostroph* and the French pronounce it as a trisyllable; and so we also ought to pronounce it, treating the e-final as silent.

A little mark like a comma (only that it is placed above the line), which indicates the elision of a vowel. In the following line, which is quoted from the handsome quarto (1720) of Jacob Tonson's *Milton*, there are two apostrophes in one word:

> Blest pair of Syrens, pledges of Heav'n's joy.
> *At a solemn Musick.*

The above definition is the usual and current one; but, in fact, this mark is used to represent the elision of other than vowels, both in English and Scottish; as the following quotation will sufficiently witness.

> Oh whistle and I'll come t'ye, my lad,
> Oh whistle and I'll come t'ye, my lad,
> Tho' father and mither and a' sud gae mad,
> Oh whistle and I'll come t'ye, my lad.

C C 6 8 3

Capitals.—According to Lindley Murray the following words should begin with capitals:

1st. The first word of every book, chapter, letter, or paragraph.

2nd. The first word after a period, and frequently after the notes of interrogation and exclamation.

3rd. Divine names: as, God, Jehovah, the Supreme Being.

4th. Proper names of persons, places, rivers, oceans, ships: as, Nelson, Trafalgar, the Victory.

5th. Adjectives derived from the proper names of places: as, Grecian, Roman, English.

6th. The first word of an example, and of a quotation in a direct form: as, 'Always remember this ancient maxim; "Know thyself."'

7th. The first word of every line in poetry. [This is a doubtful rule.]

8th. The pronoun I, and the interjection O!

9th. Terms of great historical importance: as, the Reformation, the Restoration, the Revolution.

To all which may be added a 10th, namely this: Common Nouns may take Capitals, when they are used with particular emphasis or point, and especially when they are exalted by personification.

From the flower Pleasure it was quite as much their habit to pluck the blossom Business as from the more ordinary sources: the nettle Danger was more often bound up in it in that case than usual, and required their more particular attention.—James Payn, *The Burnt Million*, c. 5 (*Cornhill Mag.* July 1889).

Diæresis.—From the Greek διαίρεσις, taking apart, separation.

This is the name given to a mark consisting of two dots which are set to indicate a syllabic division. When two vowels come together in a word and do not form a diphthong, these dots are sometimes placed over the second of the two vowels, to indicate that it forms or begins a new syllable and is not merged in the preceding vowel.

The practice of writing and printing the Diæresis is quite

recent. It entered into biblical English for the first time in the Revised New Testament published in 1881. For example, in Mark v. 22, the name which we are familiar with as Jairus, appears as Jaïrus.

Double Dash.—Two horizontal lines or strokes, one on each side of a supplementary phrase, which is slipped in by the way, for illustration or example or explanation, and which is not an essential member of the structure of the sentence. It is in fact a species of parenthesis, only distinguished from the run of the sentence by marks lighter than the parenthetic marks.—See PARENTHESIS.

She was particularly excellent in her unbending scenes in conversation with the Clown. I have seen some Olivias—and those very sensible actresses too—who in these interlocutions have seemed to set their wits at the jester, and to vie conceits with him in downright emulation. But she used him for her sport, like what he was, to trifle a leisure sentence or two with, and then to be dismissed, and she to be the Great Lady still.—*Essays of Elia*, 'On some of the old Actors.'

Besides this, my native modesty is such, that I have always been shy of assuming the honourable style of Professor, because this is a title I share with so many distinguished men,—Professor Pepper, Professor Anderson, Professor Frickel, and others—who adorn it, I feel, much more than I do.—Matthew Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, Preface.

It is in fact a minor Parenthesis, and its proper and distinct function seems to be that of enclosing an intercalated phrase, while the office of the Parenthetic curves comes into action when the member to be enclosed is an entire verbal sentence. But this is not practically observed, especially where the enclosed sentence is trite; and moreover, the Double Dash is almost superseding the Parenthetic Marks in popular literature.

I told him—it is the way of society—that we should be glad to see him, and we parted.—F. R. Stockton, *Rudder Grange* (1886), p. 35.

Sometimes we see the intercalated matter outweigh the main sentence and reduce it to insignificance. This is not good form; it has the air of lack of revision. In such cases it would generally be better to make two sentences of it.

Some philosophies imply a denial of the soul's immortality. Pantheism—that is, such immanence of God in the world and the human spirit as neglects or does away the distinction between them, so that God becomes identified with the world as one whole—does so.—Samuel Davidson, *The Doctrine of Last Things*, p. 132.

Elision.—From a Latin word for 'striking out,' is the term for the omission of a vowel in pronunciation and writing. The following exhibits the elision of *a* and of *i*, and the sign of elision is a comma in the air. APOSTROPHE.

'I'm a haymaker by trade,' said the man, 'and my trade's very slack this Christmas time.'—*Sussex Folk and Sussex Ways*, by Rev. J. Coker Egerton (1884) p. 37.

The *o'*, with the mark of elision, means, *of*, or *of the*, or *on*, or *on the*; as, 'two o'clock' is the same as to say two of the clock, or two according to the clock, or two on the clock.

There is also an Elision of arithmetical figures, and it is indicated by the same mark. In the following quotation '15 means 1715, and '45 is for 1745.

The Exhibition will be not more a memorial of the Stuarts than it will be of the Jacobites, and of the singular and tenacious loyalty which clung to the White Rose through evil report and good report, ready at all times to sacrifice life and fortune to what it deemed the cause of honour. The devotion of the French Legitimists has never been put to such a test as that of the adherents of the House of Stuart; for they lost their estates at the Revolution, and faced no such risk in support of their principles as the English and Scotch gentry who were 'out,' as the phrase ran, in the '15 and the '45, and who had still their property to lose as well as their heads.—April 12, 1888.

Hyphen (a Greek word to signify that two things are put *under one*) is a short line joining two words and indicating that they have become one compound word. This is accompanied with a change in accentuation, the accent being intensified on the first part, and lightened on the second. There is a difference in pronunciation as well as in sense between 'book case' and 'book-case' (see Dr. Murray *in voc.*); between 'head stone' and 'head-stone.'

Inverted Commas.—These are put before and after a

quotation, to distinguish quoted words from the words which are the writer's or speaker's own.

1. The general significance of this observance in literature is to avoid the appropriation of something excellent which you wish to repeat and to use, but which you do not wish to pass off as your own. Here the inverted commas are tokens of acknowledgment, and they belong to that more developed sense of literary proprietorship, which is one of the distinctions of modern as against ancient literature.

2. But the same signs are also employed as exponents of a very different sentiment. Inverted Commas are used to set in high and conspicuous relief some word or phrase which the writer does not adopt or make his own, but merely reports, echoes, and reiterates, as the cant or catchword of others.

'I have constantly felt some hesitation in deciding what objections it was worth while to report to you. On the one hand, it is waste of energy to try to kill what, if let alone, will be sure to die of itself; on the other hand, there is the danger that you might afterwards find notions, which I had passed by as too contemptible for refutation, circulating among half-learned people as the "latest results" which "eminent critics" had arrived at in Germany.'—G. Salmon, *Intr. N. T.* p. 451.

And there is a distinction of tone, well known to newspaper reporters, which speakers use when they utter what is not meant to be received as their own, what they repudiate or hold up to scorn, as in the following instance:—'And I beg leave to say, for myself, I know nothing at all about the agricultural "interest," any more than I know about the manufacturing interest or the commercial interest. There is one interest which it is our duty resolutely to place and steadily to keep in view, and that is the interest of the nation.'—W. E. Gladstone at Manchester, July 18, 1865.

3. Inverted Commas are moreover used to convey the assurance of a verbal fidelity and diplomatic exactness in the quotation of extracts from other writings, and especially when they are of a documentary nature.

At the annual general meeting of the 'Catholic Union of Great Britain' held last week under the presidency of the Marquis of

Ripon, an address to the Queen was adopted, which concludes with an expression of gratitude for the removal of disabilities, and an assurance of the 'true attachment' of its members 'to the civil Constitution under which it is their happiness to live.'—*The English Churchman*, June 23, 1887.

4. When transcripts are made of letters, the signatures of the writers' names are sometimes by scrupulous copiers marked with Inverted Commas, as a distinction from actual signatures. This, even if unnecessary, is not without a certain propriety as a matter of notarial etiquette. The same thing does not apply to letters reproduced in print, because the question of originality cannot in this case possibly arise.

5. There is some uncertainty about the choice of double or single commas. A reasonable plan seems to be to use the single commas for simple quotation, and reserve the double commas for quotation within quotation, as in the above extract from Dr. Salmon. I have put double commas where his text has single ones, that is to say, my double commas are the secondary report, the oratio obliqua, of his single ones. This may be further illustrated by the following example:

'"All this means only morality." Ah! how far nearer to the truth would these men have been had they said that morality means all this!'—S. T. Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, fin.

Parenthesis (Greek for Enclosure) is the enclosure of a phrase abruptly thrown into the midst of a sentence to assist in elucidating the subject, or to add force to an assertion or argument. The marks used to indicate a parenthesis are two vertical curves, one before and the other after the parenthetic words. See DOUBLE DASH.

Words so interposed are on a separate plane of their own, and require an attenuated tone in reading aloud (as if a sort of Aside), thus:

It is remarkable that this Evangelist (said to be anti-Jewish) has alone recorded our Lord's attendance at these feasts, and has used them as landmarks to divide the history.—G. Salmon, *Introd. N. Test.* p. 318.

In the seventeenth century these parentheses were more

used than now; they are frequent in Clarendon, sometimes two in a sentence, as in the following:

In the afternoon of the same day (when the conference had been in the painted chamber upon the court of York), Mr. Hyde, going to a place called Piccadilly, (which was a fair house for entertainment and gaming, and handsome gravel walks with shade, and where was an upper and lower bowling-green, whither very many of the nobility, and gentry of the best quality, resorted, both for exercise and conversation, as soon as ever he came into the ground, the earl of Bedford came to him, &c.—*History*, iii. 161.

Words so enclosed should not have an appearance of being in possible construction with the words that follow them. An instance like the following has been known to give a check to the reader:—

Cerinthus, one of whose notions was that the kingdom of Christ should be earthly, consisting of those carnal and sensual pleasures which he most craved for, and (for a decorous cover to these) feastings and sacrifices and slaughters of victims.—G. Salmon, D.D., *Introd. New Test.* p. 273.

Punctuation.—Under this head it is to be noted that the use of commas has considerably diminished in the present century. In the last century they are often very frequent, and perhaps this is to be connected with the extremely logical bent of that age. The prints of Greek and Latin texts were over-punctuated: Dean Alford boasted to have reduced the commas in the Greek Testament by some thousands. The following quotation from Hume's *History of England* (anno 1074), is thus punctuated in an edition of the year 1773.

The conspirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure, immediately concluded their design to be betrayed; and they flew to arms, before their schemes were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, in whose aid they placed their chief confidence. The earl of Hereford was checked by Walter de Lacy, a great baron in those parts, who, supported by the bishop of Worcester and the abbot of Evesham, raised some forces, and prevented the earl from passing the Severne, or advancing into the heart of the kingdom. The earl of Norfolk was defeated at Fagadun, near Cambridge, by

Odo, the regent, assisted by Richard de Bienfaite, and William de Warrenne, the two justiciaries.—Vol. i. p. 265.

It is quite an exploded notion that a comma should be inserted in writing at every slight or possible pause in reading. Take the following sentence—'It is well known that, when water is cooled below a certain point, contraction ceases and expansion begins.' Here there is a slight pause before *that* and sometimes we see this pause indicated by a comma; but there is a more important pause after *that* which has a superior claim to the comma not more for the interval it represents than for the logical order of thought which it regulates.

It is possible to get into a habit of composition which is so dependent upon the punctuation, that without the stops the syntax might be ambiguous. This is a weak and a bad habit. In a well-written paragraph, the syntax will be found to dictate the place of the stops, and not to be dependent upon them. There are instances in which a change of sense has been induced by a misplaced comma. In the elder version of the Psalms, there is such a case at Ps. cxlv. 3, which is thus given in the Common Prayer Books:

Great is the Lord, and marvellous, worthy to be praised; there is no end of his greatness.

This comma has the effect of making the versicle to consist of three members instead of two;—remove the comma, and *marvellous* becomes an adverb to *worthy* and so the true sense and form are restored.

The note of Exclamation is less in use than formerly: a social symptom;—as the progress of manners more and more demands the subduing of moral commotion.

Single Dash.—Of the Dash it may be said generally that it indicates a change of plane; and that when there is a second Dash, it indicates a return to the former level and so a restitution of continuity. The remarkable Anacoluthon which takes place in Ephesians iii. 1 (compared with iv. 1) is indicated in the Revision of 1881 by the new feature (unused before in the English Scriptures) of a Single Dash.

The Single Dash is also employed as the index to parallel

description, when some thought is repeated, and restated with variation of form.

Philosophy may throw doubt upon such yearning, science may call it a dream; but there is in humanity what is above and beyond science—the language of the heart, whose voice speaks in tones which echo through eternity.—Samuel Davidson, *The Doctrine of Last Things*, p. 130.

In cases where the two are intermixed it is well to observe the essential difference between this and the DOUBLE DASH. This distinction is of importance in the following quotation.

It is among the most memorable facts of Grecian history, that in spite of the victory of Philip at Chæroneia—in spite of the subsequent conquest of Thebes by Alexander, and the danger of Athens after it—in spite of the Asiatic conquests which had since thrown all the Persian force into the hands of the Macedonian king—the Athenian people could never be persuaded either to repudiate Demosthenes, or to disclaim sympathy with his political policy. How much art and ability were employed to induce them to do so, by his numerous enemies, the speech of Æschines is enough to teach us. And when we consider how easily the public sicken of schemes which end in misfortune—how great a mental relief is usually obtained by throwing blame on unsuccessful leaders—it would have been no matter of surprise, if, in one of the many prosecutions wherein the fame of Demosthenes was involved, the Dikasts had given a verdict unfavourable to him. That he always came off acquitted, and even honourably acquitted, is a proof of rare fidelity and steadiness of temper in the Athenians.—Grote, *History of Greece*, c. 95.

The Single Dash is sometimes used to suspend the course of a sentence for a moment, and then to close it with a surprize.

All this is excellent—upon paper. Unfortunately, we have always had a very efficient army upon paper, and the public would like some assurance that this organization differs from other organizations devised from time to time by the War Office in being real and workable.—*The Times*, March 12, 1889.

When such a dash separates off the last clause of a sentence, it often erects that clause into a comment or gives it a kind of parallelism with what went before.

Undoubtedly it has become so in modern times: for there being no beauty in our modern architecture, and much in the remains of the past, and these remains being almost exclusively ecclesiastical, the High Church and Romanist parties have not been slow in availing themselves of the natural instincts which were deprived of all food except from this source; and have willingly promulgated the theory, that because all the good architecture that is now left is expressive of High Church or Romanist doctrines, all good architecture ever has been and must be so,—a piece of absurdity from which, though here and there a country clergyman may innocently believe it, I hope the common sense of the nation will soon manfully quit itself.—John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, II. ch. iv. § 53.

The frequent use of the Single Dash produces the fantastic effect of a jaunty, skittish mannerism, as may often be remarked in Sterne's writings.

In the second place, for which, indeed, thou hast the same excuse, continued my uncle Toby,—when thou offeredst him whatever was in my house,—thou shouldst have offered him my house too:—A sick brother officer should have the best quarters, Trim, and if we had him with us,—we could tend and look to him:—Thou art an excellent nurse thyself, Trim,—and what with thy care of him, and the old woman's, and his boy's, and mine together, we might recruit him again at once, and set him on his legs.—

—In a fortnight or three weeks, added my uncle Toby, smiling,—he might march.

Square Brackets are now used to distinguish some extraneous insertion, as when in quoting another author the quoter inserts some explanation of his own into the midst of the quotation. Or, again, in the critical emendation of an ancient text, square brackets are used to enclose the suggestion of the critic, and keep it conspicuously distinct from the traditional text.

But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brackets were used where we should now rather employ parenthetic curves. Thus H. Hammond in his Paraphrase and Annotations on the New Testament, 1653, says in his *Advertisement to the Reader*:

So much of the verse as is explained, is included in one, if it be from the beginning of the verse, or, if not, in *two brackets*, after

this manner [ ], so that the rest of the *Text*, which is excluded by the *brackets*, may coherently be read with the *Paraphrase* of that which is included, and the *sense continue* undisturbed by that means.

In Richardson's novels we may observe the transition: for brackets and parentheses seem to be employed indifferently, thus:

Since (and that without any reason, any pretence in the world for it) he is for breaking my spirit *before* I am his, and while I am or ought to be, [O my folly, that I am not!] in my own power.—*Clarissa Harlowe*, vol. iv. letter 10.

In the seventeenth century Square Brackets were also used to indicate Quotation, as we now use inverted commas. The following is from the Preface to Sir Roger L'Estrange's pamphlet *The Reformation Reform'd.*

What might be the Drift of such a Rabble of Calumnyes, Crouded up into that Remonstrance? The Government wanted mending (it seems), and if his Majesty would but have minded his own Private Business, and left them to manage Matters of State, [We doubt not (say they) but God will crown this Parliament with such Success, as shall be the beginning and Foundation of more Honour and Happiness to his Majesty than ever yet was enjoyed by any of his Royal Predecessors].

CHAPTER IV

BEARINGS OF PHILOLOGY

A larger and a smaller sense of the term Philology—Its distinctness from Grammar—Philology beneficial to the writer of prose—Unreasonable belletristic antipathies—Philology in its specialized sense has four branches: (1) Phonetics, (2) Form-Lore or Accidence, (3) Etymology, (4) Sēmantology. (1) Phonetics:—(*a*) *Historical*: Ablaut—The English long ī—Grimm's Law—(*b*) *Dynamical*: Umlaut—Verner's Law—(*c*) Spelling-Reform. (2) Form-Lore:—The Strong Verbs—Substantives, Genitive Case—Adverbial Pronouns—Suffixes and Prefixes; Saxon, French, Latin, Greek—Particles, Separable and Inseparable—Question of the origin of Flexion. (3) Etymology:— Based upon Phonetics and Form-Lore—Roots—Occasionally Etymology may be serviceable even to the literary man—Dugald Stewart—Testimony of W. Scherer. (4) Sēmantique or Sēmantology:—Examples—Elasticity of Language—Unequal distribution of this quality—Mr. R. L. Stevenson and nursery bricks—Dean Swift's notion of an Academy—Hamilton's theory of translation rejected by Sydney Smith—Mr. Max Müller's disease of language and remedy by Definition.

On us a new light has come. I do not for a moment hesitate to say that the discovery of the comparative method in philology, in mythology—let me add in politics and history and the whole range of human thought—marks a stage in the progress of the human mind at least as great and memorable as the revival of Greek and Latin learning. The great contribution of the nineteenth century to the advance of human knowledge may boldly take its stand alongside of the great contribution of the fifteenth. Like the revival of learning, it has opened to its votaries a new world, and that not an isolated world, a world shut up within itself, but a world in which times and tongues and nations which before seemed parted poles asunder, now find each one its own place, its own relation to every other, as members of one common primæval brotherhood. And not the least of its services is that it has put the languages and the history of the so-called 'classical' world into their true position in the general history of the world. By making them no longer the objects of an exclusive idolatry, it has made them the objects of a worthier, because a more reasonable, worship.—E. A. Freeman, *Comparative Politics*, p. 302.

I PUT this fine passage at the head of this chapter, not because it sketches or designates the area to be covered in this division of my treatise, but rather for a contrary reason, namely, because standing outside my ground, it supplements and completes it. What I have to say upon Philology will rather be

interior to the subject, and the above motto gives its exterior relations. It presents to the eye a noble view of the action of the Comparative method in the open expanse of the field of knowledge.

The mere fact that it has improved the condition of human knowledge is a fact which makes Philology important to the literary man, were it only in an indirect manner. For the claim to be independent of science, which has been put forward by some of those who speak in the name of Literature, is a claim that cannot be admitted. To stand forth as the teachers of mankind and to decry knowledge;—this seems an untenable position. To deny the need of science to the teacher is to decry knowledge; for science is nothing else but knowledge well-grounded and well-ordered. The Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford on a memorable public occasion gave utterance to the saying that 'Literature,' in the usage of some people, seemed to him to mean 'chatter about Shelley';—and he was thought to have enriched the language with a new and felicitous apophthegm. But literature of this facile production cannot flourish for ever; and in the long run literary men will find it necessary to pay some respect even to philological science.

The term Philology has suffered change. In its old time-honoured sense it comprised all that appertained to the linguistic side of literary studies, and so it stood contradistinguished from those branches which are concerned with the matter, and which are comprehensively called historical. Thus Orthography, Etymology, Syntax, Prosody, Punctuation, Palæography, Epigraphy, would have been comprehensively included under Philology. It has been a result of the scientific development in this century, that this term has now become limited to what is called Comparative Philology, or the identification of equivalents in cognate languages. It has taken for its more limited province so much of linguistic study as admits of being assimilated to physical science. Thus it has parted company with Grammar and left Grammar in quiet possession of the psychological branch.[1]

[1] We have indeed swarms of books entitled Grammars, which are entirely philological and not at all grammatical. This should not confuse any student,

It cannot be claimed for Philology, as it is claimed for Grammar, that it has such a direct and manifest relation to the literary Art of Writing English, as renders it a necessary study to every one who would be a writer. There is a difference in the proximity of these two studies to the mental act of composition. Grammar deals with the powers of words in a context, that is to say, words in present function. Philology deals with their anatomy. Grammar deals with what the Germans call *Worte* living words, Philology with *Wörter* dead words; Grammar is mental, Philology is physical. It is plain that a man's Grammar must be nearer to him in the act of writing than his Philology; not because his grammatical rules are consciously exercised, but because the grammatical discipline and habit of mind goes for more in that particular operation than does the philological.

Again, Grammar is a study that lies within a more manageable compass than Philology. In Grammar it is not so much the word as the class or sort of word that we contemplate, the distinction being a mental one; in Philology it is the individual and material word that occupies our attention. Hence all Grammar lies under a few heads, and those of a mental nature, heads of thought, Categories; in Philology the groupings are indefinitely numerous, and they relate to matters of a physical nature.

In sum, Grammar is a necessary study for the elementary cultivation of every human mind: Philology is more of a specialty. If we were to estimate studies not by their scientific discoveries, but by the nearness of their touch with human life; and if we were to construct a hierarchy of Sciences upon this basis, Philology would stand a good deal above Chemistry, but considerably lower than Grammar. Yet an educated man can hardly do without some general knowledge of the nature and aims of Philology, as indeed he cannot well do without some general knowledge of the nature and aims of Chemistry.

This at least is certain, that Philology is one of those

as he may remember that there is a use of the term Grammar, by which it may mean any outline of elements in any branch of knowledge. We speak, for instance, of the Grammar of Music.

studies which must be taken into account in a treatise which has English Prose for its scope, because it is one of the instruments whereby a man's mind may be made better acquainted with the material out of which Prose is constructed. Lower down we shall see reason for thinking that it is desirable for an author to have other ways of exercising himself in his language besides the actual process of composition. Johnson dwells much upon the advantage to a writer of knowing his language in all its extension; and the English Language can hardly be known in the whole of its extension without the aid of philological study.

One recommendation of Philology is the great attractiveness which it can exercise, whereby it awakens in some minds a sentiment little short of enthusiasm. Such a warmth of feeling creates a general interest in the language, and this is certainly of great use to a writer. Whether it be due to its abstract nature, or to weariness induced by bad early teaching, or whatever be the cause, it must be admitted that Grammar produces this kindly sentiment more rarely.[1] Something must doubtless be allowed for the fact that Philology is still a comparatively recent pursuit and has not yet lost the gloss of its novelty.

The aversion which has been openly shewn to Philology and Philologers by those who take English Literature for their province, is quite natural under the circumstances, and it is only part of the ordeal which every new science has to pass through. It is yet fresh in the minds of many, that Geology had to fight through the same encounter. But still, as the days are supposed to be progressively enlightened, and as men smile at the prejudices of a past generation, it is certainly remarkable that such language as the following can be discovered in the pages of good literature.

> Besides, in these days of ours, every one who cares for literature should resist the ambitious and mischievous encroachments of philology upon the domain of letters. It is clear that philology is not literature, because many excellent writers have been quite innocent of that, and of all other science; while the most learned philologists, like most other men of science, usually write an execrable style.

[1] See however above, p. 48.

Philology has long been considered as a fair butt for the shaft of ridicule, and though it is hard to understand how such ratiocination as the above can be offered to an intelligent public by an educated man, yet it is quite easy to see that there is plenty of material in the proceedings of philologists to serve for fun before a general audience. For example:

To show him a withered frost-bitten verb, that wanted its preterite, wanted its gerunds, wanted its supines, wanted, in fact, everything in this world, fruits or blossoms, that make a verb desirable, was to earn the Don's gratitude for life.—De Quincey, *The Spanish Military Nun*, c. 6.

The chief branches which now remain under the specialized name of Philology are three: (1) Phonetics; (2) Form-Lore; (3) Etymology; to which a fourth, though as yet less recognized, may be added, namely, Sēmantology:—and we will accordingly let these four heads give us a framework for the present chapter.

1. Phonetics may be considered as of two kinds, which I will call

(*a*) Historical Phonetics.

(*b*) Dynamical Phonetics.

(*a*) In Historical Phonetics the general sequence of phonetic modifications is established with a systematic regularity which may be compared with that scale of strata by which geology explains the formation of the crust of the earth. I will give a few illustrations, partly vocalic, partly consonantal.

Of the vocalic scale the palmary example is seen in the Ablaut,[1] by which name Grimm designated certain established vowel-sequences which are most readily observed in the scheme of the Strong Verbs which is to be tabulated below. This sequence is simultaneous and (so to say) musical; we cannot bring chronology into it, as we can into the next example, which illustrates the most curious peculiarity of our English spelling and pronunciation.

[1] I keep Grimm's technical terms Ablaut and Umlaut as at once tidier and more distinct than any translation hitherto devised. The best that I have seen are 'vowel-gradation' and 'vowel-mutation,' but these are inconveniently long and far less incisive.

The most insular feature of our Language (in the phonetic branch) is the sound of long ī, which is that of a diphthong *a* + *i*.

If we compare the places in which it stands, we find that it corresponds to the German diphthong *ei*. Thus our *wine* is G. *wein*; our *bite* is G. *beissen*; our *mine, thine*, is G. *mein, dein*; our *white* G. *weiss*. Anciently, the Germans wrote *i* in these places, as we still do. But they had a phonetic reform in mediæval times, and changed this *i* to *ei*; while we made no change. That is to say, we made no change in writing; for in pronunciation the change proceeded with us exactly as with them. The German *ei* was adopted for phonetic reasons, and it was phonetically true at the time it was adopted; but it is no longer so now. That language, as well as ours, has moved on from the sound of *ei* (as in *vein*) to that of *a* + *i*. So both languages have stuck fast in their orthography; only we stuck earlier, in the *i* stage; the Germans stuck later in the *ei* stage. This difference was natural. Our literary habits were more developed than theirs, and accordingly orthographic change was less easy for us.

Originally, both languages wrote *i* and pronounced it as our present *ee*, and there are one or two surviving English instances in which this original *i* retains its original *ee* sound. The village-name of 'Ide' near Exeter is now written as we know documentarily that it was written in the eleventh century, and it is called 'Eade.' Another instance is provincial. The 'spikes' which are used by the thatcher are in Somerset and Gloucestershire called not 'spighks' but 'speeks.'

In regard to the Consonants, the first broad ground of Phonetics was laid out by Grimm's Law, which was a scheme exhibiting a regular ordinance of change, as between the Mute consonants of the Classic (including Sanskrit), and those of the Teutonic languages, especially that Low Dutch family to which English belongs. Practically, this Law may be illustrated most conveniently by some Classic words on the one hand and their English cognates on the other. Before we proceed to state the Law it is necessary to premise that the Mute consonants are subdivided into three groups, viz. Guttural, Dental, Labial, and that each of these groups contains three varieties, Thin, Medial, Aspirate.

	Guttural	*Dental*	*Labial*
Thin (tenues) . .	*k*	*t*	*p*
Medial . . .	*g*	*d*	*b*
Aspirate . . .	*h*	*th*	*f*

The Law may be thus stated:—Where a Classic word has a Medial Consonant (b, d, or g), its English cognate will have a Tenuis (p, t, or k); where a Classic word has a Tenuis, its English cognate will have an Aspirate (f, th, or h); where a Classic word has an Aspirate, its English cognate will have a Medial. In a tabulated form it may be presented thus:

	Guttural	*Dental*	*Labial*
Classic . . .	*g k ch* (*h*)	*d t th*	*b p f*
English . . .	*k h g*	*t th d*	*p f b*
	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

Here we have nine different steps or transitions or pairs of equivalents; and perhaps the simplest way of proceeding will be to test the Law by enquiring how far we can discover instances for each of the nine cases.

1. Classic *g* = English *k* (c).—Gk. γένος, L. *genus*, E. *kin*; γόνυ, *genu*, *knee*; γι-γνώ-σκειν, (*g*)*noscere*, *know*; *granum*, *corn*; γέρανος, *grus*, *crane*; γράφειν, *carve*; *gelidus*, *cold*; γένυς, *gena*, A.S. *cin* (E. chin); ἐγώ, *ego*, A.S. *ic* (*I*); μέγας, A.S. *micel* (much); ζυγόν, *jugum*, *yoke*.

2. Classic *k* (c) = English *h*.—Gk. ἑ-κατόν, —κοντα, L. *centum*, *E. hund*-red; L. *quis*, A.S. *hwá* (E. who); L. *cornu*, E. *horn*; καλάμη, *culmus*, *halm*; σκῦτος, *cutis*, A.S. *hýd* (E. hide); καρδία, *cor*, *heart*; κλυτός, *in-clutus*, A.S. *hlúd* (loud); ὀκτώ, *octo*, A.S. *eahta* (eight); λευκός, *lucere*, A.S. *leóht* (light).

3. Classic *ch* (h) = English *g*.—χήν, *anser*, *gander*, *goose*; χολή, *gall*; L. *hostis*, A.S. *gæst* (guest); χόρτος, *hortus*, A.S. *geard* (yard); χαίνειν, A.S. *gánian* (*yawn*).

4. Classic *d* = English *t*.—Gk. δάκρυ, E. *tear*; δέκα, *decem*, *ten*; ὀ-δόντα, *dentem*, *tooth*; δαμᾶν, *domare*, *tame*; δρῦς, *tree*; δύο, *duo*, *two*:—L. *ad*, E. *at*; ἔδειν, *edere*, *eat*; ἴδειν, *videre*, *wit*.

5. Classic *t* = English *th*.—Gk. τέγος, *tegere*, *thatch*; L. *tenuis*, E. *thin*; *tonare*, *thunder*; *tu*, *thou*; τρεῖς, *tres*, *three*:—L. *frater*, E. *brother*.

6. CLASSIC *th* = ENGLISH *d.* — Gk. *θύρα*, E. *door*; *θήρ*, *deer*; *θυγάτηρ*, *daughter*; *θαρσεῖν*, *dare*;—*ἐ-ρυθρός*, *red.*

7. CLASSIC *b* = ENGLISH *p*. Here the Law appears to be at fault. There is no adequate evidence that the usual shifting has taken place.

8. CLASSIC *p* = ENGLISH *f.*—Gk. *πατήρ*, L. *pater*, E. *father*; *πόδα*, *pedem*, *foot*; *πολύς*, *full*; L. *pellis*, *fell*; *πῶλος*, *pullus*, *foal*; L. *paucus*, E. *few*; L. *piscis*, E. *fish*; *πῦρ*, *fire*; L. *pecus*, A.S. *féoh* (E. fee); *ἀπό*, *of*; *πέντε*, *five*; *πύξ*, *pugnus*, *fist.*

9. CLASSIC *f* = ENGLISH *b.*—Gk. *φονός*, E. *bane*; *φηγός*, *fagus*, *beech*; *φέρω*, *fero*, *bear*; *φράτηρ*, *frater*, *brother*; L. *forare*, E. *bore*; *φύειν*, *fui*, *be*; *fra(n)gere*, E. *break*; L. *flare*, E. *blow.*

This may suffice for that branch of Phonetics which I have called Historical Phonetics, because they are obtained by generalization from recorded facts. We may now pass to the next branch, in which we shall see a deeper involution of the enquiry.

(*b*) By Dynamical Phonetics I mean those phonetic observations in which not merely the fact of change or transition is registered, but account is also taken of an apparent cause of the operation.

Of this branch there are two most curious and interesting examples, which it will not be possible to do more than mention in this place. The description of them belongs to the philological treatise. The first of these is known by Grimm's name of Umlaut, and in this process it appears that a vowel has been assimilated to the nature of one which is to come after it, and which is yet unspoken. Thus the word *fen* is the outcome of an older *fani*; so is *net* of *nati*. The operative cause is here the vowel *i*, which has a reflective action upon the preceding *a*; this is known as the *i*-Umlaut. This same cause acting not upon *a*, but upon long *ō*, produced long *ē*: thus our *feet* is in Old Saxon *fôti*. The same is the account of *queen*, *speed*, and in the same manner the verb to *feed* is derived by Umlaut from the substantive *food*. The forms *feet*, *geese*, *men*, *mice*, *teeth*, which now constitute a small group of exceptional plurals, are among the products of Umlaut.[1]

[1] More about Umlaut in my *English Philology*, § 127 ff., 381, 383.

The other example is that which is called Verner's Law, after the name of its author, Karl Verner of Copenhagen, who published it in 1875. It supplements Grimm's Law in points where that law fails to afford explanation. But whereas Grimm's Law was only a generalization of observed sequences, without reference to a cause, the essence of Verner's Law lies in its production of a cause. Certain observed anomalies postulated some very elastic and variable cause; such a cause was found in Accent. It speaks thus: Where Grimm's Law might hold good under a normal placement of the Accent, it fails to hold if the Accent is displaced. Such displacement has been demonstratively matched with the phenomena to be explained, but the data have to be fetched from far, namely, from Sanskrit, and that is further than we can pursue a digression. But it flings open before our eyes a wonderful glimpse of the wide sympathies of the great Aryan family of language;—and if the writer of literary English should sometimes lift his eyes to these sublime flights of philology it could hardly be otherwise than improving to his mind and cultivating to his taste.

Points of English, previously obscure, which this remarkable Law has explained, are such as these:—The *r* in *lorn*, participle of an old verb with *s* nearly akin to our verb *lose*; Milton's *frore*, participle of *freeze*; it explains how *rear* can be the causal of the verb to *rise*; it explains *d* coming out of *th*, as in *sod*, preterite of *seethe*.

(c) This branch of Philology has already had results which aim at becoming practical. For there can be no doubt that the scientific study of Phonetics has greatly enforced the demand for spelling-reform, which was at first instigated merely by the anomalies and difficulties of the traditional orthography. Here the cause of education has joined hands with that of Science. Mr. Pitman began on practical grounds, and annexed the scientific; Mr. Max Müller and Mr. Sweet began on the scientific ground, and proceeded to support the practical.

Against this great and influential movement the resistance is not loud, but it is wide and firm. It is composed of the historical interest joined with the literary; and in one word it

may be referred to that natural and common sentiment, the attachment to national continuity. I mean 'national' in the largest sense, the sense in which Englishmen and Americans are nationally one. A neat and pleasant summary of the case proceeded in an incidental way from an American pen. The hesitation of those who look dubiously on Spelling-Reform has never been more happily depicted than in a letter which was addressed by Dr. Wendell Holmes ('The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table') to a member of the English Spelling Reform Association.

If I have not taken sides with the Spelling Reform movement, it is very probably because I was not taken hold of early enough. I spell 'honor' and 'favor' without the *u*, and I may yet come to 'catalog' and 'felosofe'—if that is good phonography. At any rate I should not care to be an obstructive (if I could be) in the way of any well-organized, scholarly attempt to reform our English —and American—language. It is certainly barbarous to make *ough* take so many forms of pronunciation as it now does. But you must allow a fair share of old square-toed prejudice in their personal likings to old square-toed people. I hate to see my name spelt *Homes*, yet I never pronounce the *l*. I know from old Camden that its derivation is from the word *holm* and I want the extra letter; an *l* is as good as an inch in this connection, if I may venture a debilitated pleasantry. There are many things I should like to have a glimpse of a hundred years from now, among the rest our English spelling. I have little doubt that many of the changes you contemplate will have taken place, and that I should look back upon myself in 1880 as a hopeless bigot to superannuated notions long since extinct.

2. In the second division, which I have called Form-Lore after the German title *Form-Lehre*, the most salient and important group of phenomena is that which surrounds the Strong Verbs. These Verbs have a force of expression which is altogether peculiar to themselves, as Jacob Grimm felt, when he called them *eine Hauptschönheit unserer Sprachen*, a capital beauty of our family of Languages. These Strong Verbs are, and have been for hundreds of years, on the wane; and the question is, whether the artist in English is not interested in cultivating them and trying to retain what still remains of them. Within the last three generations there has

been a revived appreciation of them;—for example, we have now the strong preterite *shone* firmly established, and no one would think of writing *shined*, as Steele did in 1709. 'This put us into a long field of discourse about the beauties, who were mothers to the present, and shined in the boxes twenty years ago.'—*The Tatler*, No. 1.

In the German literature, the literature which Grimm loved so well, the Preterite of the Strong Verb is absolutely lost to Prose; it exists only as a picturesque archaism reserved for the use of the poet. In these days when so much German is redd in England, and when we are catching so much of the German turns of expression, it is to be hoped that we shall not imitate the German's neglect of his native Preterite (for this neglect seems to apply hardly less to the Weak than to the Strong Preterites), and expand our sentences unprofitably with the diluting aid of the auxiliary.

The following Table will exhibit the present fragmentary condition of our Strong Verbs, and at the same time afford some glimpse of their elder history. In this Table, it is only the forms printed in ordinary type, that are now current. For the rest, the old supplementary words that fill the lacunæ, those in SMALL CAPITALS are Anglo-Saxon, those in **black letter** are medieval, those in **thick type** are of the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, those in spaced type are from collateral dialects mostly Scottish; those in *Italics* are negligent or abnormal forms.

PRESENT	PRETERITE	PARTICIPLE
ake (ache)	**oke**	
bake	beuk	**baken**
bear	**bar**, bore, **bare**	born, *borne*
beat	beat	beaten, beat
BELGE	BEALH	BOLGEN, **bowln**
be	—	**bin**, been
bid	**bade**, **bid**	bidden, bid
bide, a-bide	bid (Som.), -bode	**bidden**
bind	**bond**, bound	**bounden**, bound
bite	**bote**, bit	bitten, bit
blinn (cease)	**blan**	BLUNNEN
blow	blew	blown

PRESENT	PRETERITE	PARTICIPLE
bow	BÉAH	BOGEN
break	**brak**, **brake**, broke	broken
brew	**brew**	brewn
burst	**brast**	**bursten**, burst
carve	**carf**	**corven**, carven
cast	coost	**casten**
chide	chid, **chode**	**chidden**, **chid**
choose	**ches**, chose	chosen
cleave (divide)	**cleef**, **clave**, clove	cloven
cleave (adhere)	*clave*	
climb	**clam**, **clomb**	**clomben**
cling	clung	clung
come	**com**, com, came	**comen**, come
creep	crap, **crope**	**cropen**, cruppen
crow	**crew**	CRÂWEN
CWEÞE	quoth	GECWEDEN
delve	**dalf**	**dolven**
dig	dug	dug
DRAGE, draw	**draw**, drew	DRAGEN, drawn
dread	**drad**	**ȝdrad**
drink	drank, drunk	**drunken**, drunk
drive	drove	driven
eat	ett, ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen, *fell*
fare	foor, fure	-fairn
fight	fought	**foughten**, fought
find	**fand**, found	**ſounden**, found
fling	**flong**, flang, flung	flung
flow	FLÉOW	**flown**
fly	**fleh**, flew	flown
flyte (scold)	**flote**, flate	flyten
FEALDE	FÉOLD	**folden**
freeze	froze	**frore**, frozen
fret	fret	**freten**, fret
get	**gat**, got	gotten, got
be-gin	-gan	-gun
give	**gaff**, gave	given
glide	**glod**, **glode**	**gliden**
gnaw	**gnew**	**gnawn**
go, GANGAN	GÉONG	gone
GRAFE	GRÔF	**graven**
grind	**grond**, ground	**grunden**, ground
gripe	**grap**	**gripen**
grow	grew	grown
HÂTE	**hight**	HÂTEN

PRESENT	PRETERITE	PARTICIPLE
heave	hove	**hoven**
help	**holp**	**holpen, holp**
hew	HÉOW	hewn
hide	hid	hidden, hid
hing, hang	hung	hung
hold	held	**holden**, held
knead	knad	**kneden**
know	knew	known
lade, HLADE	HLÔD	**loden**, laden
laugh	**lough**, leugh, leuch	
eaze (glean)	LÆS, LÉSON	LESEN
leap, HLÉAPE	lap, lope	loupen, luppen
LÉOSE, **lese**	LÉAS	**lorn**
let, lat	**leet**, loot, let	letten, let
lie	lay	**lien**, lain
LÎFE (remain)	LÂF, LIFON	LIFEN [1]
melt	**malt**	molten
mete	**met**	**meten**
mow	mew (Cambridgesh.)	mown
NIME (take)	NAM, NÂMON	NUMEN
plat	plet	
quake	**quook, quoke**	
reap	**rep**	**ropen**
ride	**rood**, rode, rid	ridden, *rid*

[1] LÎFE &c. The insertion of a verb which has no single member surviving within the horizon of current English, requires some explanation. Though this LÎFAN does not itself survive, yet we have from it a secondary and derivative verb *leave*, which is the causal of LÎFAN. Out of LÂF the preterite as a root, sprang the secondary verb LǼFAN, meaning, cause to remain, and that is *leave*. So out of a strong verb is developed a weak, out of an intransitive a transitive, and this example is typical of many an extant verb which stands in this natural relation to some ancient and obsolete verb.

Another instance of an old verb now quite lost is NIMAN. This I have inserted for the uncommon interest that surrounds it, as shewing us that our verb for this meaning was the same as that which the Germans still retain, *nehmen*. The rapid manner in which this verb was ousted by the irruption of the Denish *take* is something remarkable. It is also interesting for the relics of the word in literature and in slang, as for example the name of Shakspeare's Corporal Nym.

A vast amount of curious literary information as well as valuable philological knowledge radiates from these verbs as from a natural core of the language, and for evidence of this I refer the reader to the pages which follow the Strong Verbs in the Fourth edition of my *English Philology*.

PRESENT	PRETERITE	PARTICIPLE
ring	rang, rung	rungen, rung
rinne, run	ran	ronnen, runen, run
rise	rose, *ris*	risen, *rose*
rive	rof, rave	riven
for-sake	-sook	-saken
saw	—	sawn
see	saw, see	seen
seethe	seth, sod	sodden
shake	shook	shaken, *shook*
shape	shope	shapen
shave	shoof	shaven
shear	shar, shore	shorn
shed	shad, shod	GESCÉADEN
shew	—	shewn
shine	shone	shinen, *shone*
shoot	schef, shot	shotten
shove	shof	shoven
shrink	shrank, shrunk	shrunken, shrunk
shrive	shrove	shriven
sing	sang, sung	sungen, sung
sink	sank, sunk	sunken, sunk
sit	sat, safe	SETEN, sitten, *sat*
slay	slow, slew	SLÆGEN, slain
sleep	slep	
slide	slod, slid	slidden, slid
sling	slang, slung	slung
slink	slank	slunk
slit	slat, slit	slyfyn, slit
smite	smote	smitten
sow	sew	sown
speak	spak, spake, spoke	spoken, *spoke*
spin	span	spun
spring	sprang	sprungen, sprung
stand	stood	*stood*
stave	stove	stove
steal	stal, stole	stolen
stick	stak, stuck	stoken, stuck
sting	stang, stong, stung	ston en, stung
stink	stank, stunk	stonken, stunk
STREGDE	STRÆGD, STRUGDON	strewn
stride	strade, strode, strid	-stridden
strike	strake	stricken, *strooke*
string	strung	strung
strive	strof, strove	striven
sup	sop	sopen

PRESENT	PRETERITE	PARTICIPLE
swear	sware, swore	sworn
swell	**swal**	swollen
swim	swam, **swumm**	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken, *took*
tear	**tar**, **tare**, tore	torn
thrive	throve	thriven
throw	threw	thrown
tread	**trad**, trod	trodden, trod
wade	WÓD, **wade**	WADEN
wake	woke	WACEN
walk	**welk**	**walke**
wash	wush	washen
wax	**wex**	waxen
wear	**ware**, wore	worn
weave	wove	woven
WESE	was	gewesen (Germ.
win	won	**wonnen**, won
wind	**wond**, wound	**wonden**, wound
worth	WEARÞ	GEWORDEN, **worth**
wreake	WRÆC, **wrak**	**ywroken**
wring	wrang, wrung	wrung
write	**wrat**, wrote, writ	written, writ, *wrote*
writhe	WRÅÞ, **wroth**	writhen
yield	**yold**	**yolde**, **yold**

The Strong Verbs form the central core of the language; and the changes they have undergone in process of time are matters of curious and varied interest. But of vastly greater interest than those changes which are due to the waste and ravage of time in its chronological progress, is that fixed and stationary inward scale of change on which depends the faculty of tense-variation in the Strong Verbs. So ancient is this systematic scale of variation, which was already old before any of the above-mentioned dilapidation began to manifest itself, and so important was it found to be by the great German philologer Jacob Grimm, that he gave it a special technical name, and called it Ablaut. This imports the idea of a systematic vowel variation. And this technical term has not rested within the limits of its native country, it

has spread with the diffusion of Comparative Philology, it has been naturalized as an English word, and it has been recognized in that character by Dr. Murray in the *New English Dictionary*. This Ablaut is a powerful agent in scientific etymology, but it is not on that account quite excluded from all relations with matters of practical utility. If the writer should be curious to know the fundamental reason why there has been a continual vacillation between *sang* and *sung* as the preterite of the verb to sing, it is the Ablaut that makes it clear. Many other verbs have two preterites, or have had; as *rid* and *writ* in good literature, where we now use *rode* and *wrote*. Thus Abraham Cowley in his *Essays* (about 1665): 'I met with several great persons whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it.' (*Of Myself.*) The literary man will find a little exact knowledge on such points very desirable, if for no other reason, at least for this, that it will heighten his interest in the material with which his Art is concerned.[1]

Substantives, Genitive Case.—To such a length has the Deflexionization of the English language proceeded that we have only one relic of Case in the Declension of Substantives, namely, the Genitive in *'s*, the relic of our old *-es* and a still older *-as*. And this Case-form is by no means in possession of the whole genitival function. Indeed, its employment is rather exceptional. The ordinary Genitive is the phrasal one, which is formed with the preposition *of*, after the model of the French Genitive with *de*. The use of our native and vernacular Genitive is very circumscribed. As an illustration of this fact, we may notice how sharply it strikes the reader, if a writer do but ever so little stretch beyond its narrow sphere the action of this surviving Flexion. If in a leading Article we find a dinner at the Mansion House referred to as 'London's hospitality,' it makes us pause and look again.

Allowing it to be quite true that to return good for evil in the case of Mr. Phelps, and to extend London's hospitality to one who

[1] For a detailed account of Ablaut, see my *English Philology*, § 123 ff. 278. The account of the two Preterites will be found under the latter reference.

has certainly given us some cause for indignation, is an act of the purest magnanimity, it is questionable if it is worth performing, supposing nobody is likely to look at it in that light.—*The Standard*, January 25, 1889.

Pronominal Adverbs.—In Pronounal Adverbs we have a rich assortment of a Compound nature; Adverbs now written as a single word, which were previously in the condition of Phrase. Such are *hereof, thereto, heretofore* &c. They are most of them rather antiquated, but during the last generation which has done so much for the restoration of native English, they have been from time to time recalled. It is quite one of the recovered privileges of our day, that we are permitted, without fear of singularity, to indulge in these picturesque and expressive symbols. In the Inaugural Address of President Harrison, March 4, 1889, we have *thereunder* (in a passage reserved for quotation below) and *thereof.*

Our naturalization laws should be so amended as to make an inquiry into the character of persons applying for citizenship more careful and searching. We now accept men as citizens without knowledge of their fitness, and they assume the duties of citizenship without the knowledge of what they are. The privileges of American citizenship are so great, and its duties so grave, that we may well insist upon good knowledge of every person applying for them, and good knowledge by him of our institutions. We should not cease to be hospitable to immigration, but we should cease to be careless about the character thereof.

A Table of Pronominal Adverbs (Phrasal Compounds).

Here	There	Where
hereabout	thereabout	whereabout
hereabouts	thereabouts	whereabouts
		whereas
hereafter	thereafter	
hereat	thereat	whereat
herebefore		
hereby	thereby	whereby
		wherever
	therefore	wherefore
herefrom	therefrom	

HERE	THERE	WHERE
herein	therein	wherein
hereinbefore		
hereinto	thereinto	whereinto
hereof	thereof	whereof
hereon	thereon	whereon
hereout	thereout	
		whereso
		wheresoever
		wherethrough (Wisdom xix. 8)
hereto	thereto	whereto
heretofore		
hereunder	thereunder	
hereunto	thereunto	whereunto
hereupon	thereupon	whereupon
herewith	therewith	wherewith
herewithal	therewithal	wherewithal

The most elementary guidance for the classification and sorting of words is given by the terminations, and, in the case of a certain order of Compounds, by the Prefixes. Of these Prefixes and Suffixes the following are the most important.

SAXON TERMINATIONS: (1) OF SUBSTANTIVES.

-T, as *blight, fight, gift, height, light, might, rift, sight, thought, weight, yeast.*

-TH, as *breadth, death, filth, girth, growth, length, mirth, sloth, troth, width.*

-OCK and -KIN are Diminutives; *hillock* is a little hill; *lambkin* is a little lamb. And so *bullock, hassock; catkin, griskin, napkin, pipkin.*

-ER, as *baker, ditcher, fiddler, fisher, fowler, Londoner, miller, -monger.*

-ING and -LING, as *blessing, clothing, darling, evening, farthing, gosling, shilling.*

-NESS, as *blindness, darkness, fulness, goodness, wilderness, witness.*

-DOM, as *Christendom, heathendom, kingdom, martyrdom, wisdom.*

-HOOD, as *boyhood, childhood, hardihood, manhood, widowhood.*

-SHIP, as *fellowship, friendship, lordship, workmanship, worship.*

(2) Of Adjectives.

-OW, as *callow, fallow, hollow, narrow, sallow.*
-IL, -EL, -LE, as *brittle, evil, fickle, idle, little, middle, nimble.*
-EN, -N, as *brazen, earthen, golden, leaden, wooden, woollen.*
-ISH, as *apish, boorish, churlish, foolish, peevish, selfish, waspish.*
-Y, as *burly, dusty, flowery, hearty, knotty, mighty.*
-LY (=like), as *cleanly, friendly, homely, manly, worldly.*
-SOME, as *buxom* (=bucksome), *handsome, irksome, loathsome, wholesome.*
-WARD, as *forward, inward, upward, untoward, wayward.*
-FUL, as *careful, fruitful, merciful, thankful, useful.*
-LESS, as *careless, fruitless, heedless, useless.*

Saxon Prefixes.

BE- and BY-, as *become, behalf, belief, belong; by-word, by-way.*
FOR- and FORE-, as *forbid, forebode, forget, forgive, forlorn, forshorten, forward.*
HAND-, as *handcuff, handicap, handicraft, handiwork, handle, handsel, handsome, handy.*
MIS-, as *misgiving, mislead, mistake, mistrust.*
OFF-, as *offal, offshoot, offscouring, offspring.*
OUT-, as *outcry, outgoing, outlaw, outset, outstrip, outward.*
OVER-, as *overbearing, overcome, overflow, overlook, overturn.*
UN-, as *unfair, ungodly, unlawful, unlike, unripe, unwise.*
UNDER-, as *undergo, underhand, understand, undertake.*
UP-, as *upland, upright, upset, upshot, upward.*
WITH-, as *withdraw, withhold, withstand.*

The Chief French Terminations: (1) of Nouns.

-Y (in the early period spelt -IE), as *company, courtesy, envy, felony, glory, jealousy.*
-LE, as *battle, cattle, fable, people, table, uncle.*
-EL, as *bushel, chapel, damsel, gravel, morsel.*
-ERY or -RY, as *ancestry, brewery, cookery, finery, nursery.*
-SON, -SOM, -SION or -SHION, as *comparison, declension, fashion, lesson, ransom, reason, season, venison.*
-MENT, as *commandment, development, engagement, improvement.*
-ET (diminutive), as *cabinet, cricket, hatchet, pocket, rivulet.*
-ETTE, as *etiquette, mignonette, rosette, wagonette.*
-LET, as *armlet, bracelet, chaplet, frontlet, gauntlet.*

-AGE, as *average, carriage, damage, message, village, voyage.*

-ER, -OR, -IER, -EER, as *auctioneer, bachelor, barrier, cashier, emperor, gardener, governor, mountaineer, pamphleteer, prayer, river, saviour, razor, traitor.*

-EE, as *absentee, grandee, guarantee, refugee, trustee.*

-ARD, -ART, as *braggart, coward, drunkard, tankard, wizard.*

-ON, -EON, -ION, -OON, as *balloon, champion, dungeon, falcon, gallon, lion, mutton.*

-INE, -IN, as *basin, cousin, famine, resin, routine, ruin, vermin.*

-URE, as *adventure, culture, furniture, measure, nature, picture.*

-ICE, -ISE, as *avarice, cowardice, justice, merchandise, notice.*

-ESSE, -ESS, as *finesse, largess, prowess.* This termination was used as a sign of the feminine.

-ITY, -TY, as, *antiquity, city, dexterity, loyalty, novelty, pity, quality, surety, velocity.*

-ANCE, -ANCY, as *acquaintance, constancy, forbearance, obeisance, vengeance.*

-ENCE, -ENCY, as *affluence, benevolence, confidence, diffidence, experience, science.*

-OUR, as *ardour, colour, fervour, honour, valour.*

(2) OF ADJECTIVES.

-EL, -AL, -LE, as *cruel, gentle, humble, menial, noble, simple.* Some of these have become nouns, as *cordial, jewel, victual.*

-EIGN, -AIN, -EN, as *certain, foreign, sudden.* Many of these have become nouns, as *campaign, domain, fountain, mountain, sovereign.*

-ABLE, -IBLE, as *accessible, agreeable, comfortable, forcible, respectable, valuable.*

-ANT, as *brilliant, constant, gallant, pleasant, verdant.* Many have become nouns, as *annuitant, assailant, claimant, descendant.*

-IC (French *-ique*), as *angelic, domestic, eccentric, heroic, public, volcanic.*

-ESQUE, as *grotesque, picturesque.*

-OUS, as *chivalrous, enormous, imperious, ominous, precious, zealous.*

These Lists may help the student to form a distinct impression of the Saxon and French elements generally, as apart from the Latin and Greek of the modern period. But in order to have a true touch of the earlier elements of our composite speech it is necessary to make familiar acquaintance with

some texts of the periods. It is not so necessary to read much as to know some specimens well. For the Old English period the best and easiest thing is the Saxon Gospels, of which I have furnished some pages of selections at the end of my *Beginner's Book in Anglo-Saxon*, where also will be found some of the necessary helps. For the French period of our language the best author is Chaucer, and it is not necessary to read a great quantity; the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales is a mine of instruction both as to language and as to history: it should be redd over and over, till it is known almost by heart. Once familiarly acquainted with my pieces from the Saxon Gospels, and with the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, the student will feel that he is in touch with those two great stages of the history of the language, and will know the difference of their effect from the effect of the more developed modern language.

The Latin formatives are:

(1) NOUNS IN

-ACY, as *accuracy, diplomacy, fallacy, legacy, privacy.*
-ATION, -ITION, -TION, -ION, as *action, congratulation, contrition, region, transaction.*
-AL, as *dismissal, proposal, recital, revival, victual.*
-ATE, as *associate, candidate, delegate, magistrate, potentate.*
-TUDE, as *attitude, beatitude, decrepitude, fortitude, vicissitude.*

(2) ADJECTIVES IN

-IVE, as *authoritative, comparative, inquisitive, legislative, superlative.*
-ILE, -IL, as *civil, docile, fertile, hostile, juvenile, subtil.*
-INE, -IN, as *feminine, internecine, Latin, Philistine, sanguine.*
-ARY, as *exemplary, military, parliamentary, salutary, visionary.*
-ATORY, as *derogatory, expiatory, nugatory, obligatory.*
-ENT, as *dependent, efficient, indulgent, munificent.*
-LENT, as *corpulent, fraudulent, opulent, violent.*
-ATE, as *accurate, desolate, moderate, subordinate, temperate.*
-AL, as *colonial, colossal, commercial, intellectual, universal.*
-ICAL, as *archeological, ecclesiastical, economical, political, technical.*
-AR, as *circular, familiar, perpendicular, popular, vulgar.*
-AN, -IAN, as *American, Christian, metropolitan, Roman, veteran.*
-ARIAN, as *latitudinarian, utilitarian, valetudinarian, vegetarian.*

The Greek formatives are :

(1) NOUNS IN

-Y, as *academy, astronomy, geometry, irony, panoply, rhapsody.*
-ERY, as *baptistery, cemetery, psaltery.*
-ISM, as *archaism, criticism, egotism, organism, plagiarism.*
-IST, as *alarmist, capitalist, novelist, optimist.*
-ASM, as *enthusiasm, pleonasm, sarcasm.*
-AST, as *enthusiast, iconoclast, periphrast.*
-YSM, as *paroxysm.*
-ICS, as *athletics, ethics, gymnastics, politics.*
-LOGY, as *biology, chronology, geology, ornithology, tautology.*

(2) ADJECTIVES IN

-IC, as *æsthetic, dramatic, epic, graphic, poetic, telegraphic, theoretic.* It is not an easy matter to distinguish these Greek adjectives in *-ic* from the French ones of the same termination.
-ISTIC, as *antagonistic, characteristic, pugilistic.*
-ASTIC, as *enthusiastic, gymnastic, pleonastic.*

This branch of Philology leads up to some subtle investigations. There has been a great deal of debate about the origin and development of Flexion. All these terminations which in flectional languages indicate the grammatical character of words, in what relation did they originally stand to their base-words ? The early philologers supposed that every flectional termination had once been a word, and so all Derivatives were originally Compounds. Such was the theory of Bopp. This approaches to the doctrine that the origin of Indo-European grammar is to be sought in agglutination. Are we to say of the whole body of ancient endings which gave to the languages their inflectional character, that they were at first mere suffixed words, like the English *-hood*, or *-dom*, or *-ly* ? In this case the sense of the terminations was plainer at first and has become vaguer in process of time. Or are we rather to suppose that numerous and various word-endings, physically or phonetically produced, were sifted by spontaneous selection and grouped by instinctive analogies and had a grammatical sense redd into them ? This is the opinion of Professor Sayce, who writing on this subject in

The Academy (October 26, 1889) ended with the following quotation from M. Parmentier.

At the beginning of every organized inflectional language it is necessary to place a sort of preparatory period of confusion and multiplied forms. Little by little, by a kind of slow selection and equalization, it sets apart certain fixed linguistic groups corresponding to the logical categories; the flections of grammar become more and more specialized in their function; the mind attaches to them a sense identical with that which they impress on the signification of the inflected word; they form grammatical systems from which other forms, equally possible, but too incongruous, are eliminated. Thus whole systems are created, like those of the verb or the noun, presenting flections which are apparently homogeneous, although their true origin may be very diverse.—*Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique*, 1889.

3. We come now to the third division, that of Etymology. This is a branch of the scientific study of language which is based upon the two former divisions of Phonetics and Form-Lore.

The ambitious aim of Etymologists is, after identifying a word with its cognates in kindred dialects, to attach it to one of a limited number of radical elements called Roots. In this process the etymologist uses his Phonetic Laws to arrange the cognates in subordination or co-ordination; then he separates the grammatical formative from the stem, and the stem from the Root. Professor Skeat gives the following definition of a Root:—'The Root of a given word in any Aryan Language may be defined as the original monosyllabic element which remains after the word has been stripped of everything of the nature of prefixes and formative suffixes.' He then takes Professor Whitney's instance of the word *irrevocable*, in which *ir* (=*in* not) and *re* (again) are prefixes; whilst *-able* (Lat *a-bi-li-s*) is made up of formative suffixes;—so that the Root of this word, in its Latin form, is *voc*. I cannot do better than follow Professor Skeat in quoting Whitney's exposition of the doctrine of Roots.[1]

Elements like *voc*, each composing a single syllable, and con-

[1] Skeat, *Principles of Etymology*, § 265:—referring to Whitney's *Language and the Study of Language*, ed. 2 (1868), p. 254 ff.

taining no traceable sign of a formative element, resisting all our attempts at reduction to a simpler form, are what we arrive at as the final results of our analysis of the Indo-European vocabulary; every word, of which this is made up—save those whose history is obscure, and cannot be read far back toward its beginning—is found to contain a monosyllabic root as its central significant portion, along with certain other accessory portions, syllables or remains of syllables, whose office it is to define and direct the radical idea. The roots are never found in practical use in their naked form; they are (or, as has been repeatedly explained, have once been) always clothed with suffixes, or with suffixes and prefixes; yet they are no mere abstractions, dissected out by the grammarian's knife from the midst of organisms of which they were ultimate and integral portions; they are rather the nuclei of gradual accretions, parts about which other parts gathered to compose orderly and membered wholes; germs, we may call them, out of which has developed the intricate structure of later speech. And the recognition of them is an acknowledgment that Indo-European language, with all its fulness and inflective suppleness, is descended from an original monosyllabic tongue; that our ancestors talked with one another in single syllables, indicative of the ideas of prime importance, but wanting all designation of their relations; and that out of these, by processes not differing in nature from those which are still in operation in our own tongue, was elaborated the marvellous and varied structure of all the Indo-European dialects.

It should however be added that opinions differ as to the degree of validity to be accorded to this doctrine of roots; some regarding it as scientific knowledge, others as theory.

Etymology in its more familiar sense (viz. tracing the pedigree of a word within the region of history) is a pursuit that has always had its votaries, and now it can be studied with a scientific certainty that has well nigh banished its old and proverbial ambiguities. Etymology in this sense may often suggest or determine the choice of words in diction, and there are times when it may serve as a guard against error. It sometimes happens that two words are very like one another in their external form, and also at the same time that they run one another very close in their signification, while yet they may be two totally distinct words with separate sources of their own, and that acquaintance with such a fact may open the eyes of a writer to a fine

distinction and save him from a blunder. Two such words are *council* and *counsel*, words which have often been confused, and that by writers of mark and reputation. A single quotation from a standard author will be sufficient proof of this allegation.

> But this embarrassment the government was anxious to avert; and many causes concurred to favour moderate councils. A committee was therefore appointed in the Commons, to search for precedents.—Sir Erskine May, *Constitutional History of England*, eighth edition (1887), Vol. ii. p. 109.

But we may venture to say generally that all cultivated knowledge of the elements of words will have its effect in a work of such sensitive operation as that of writing prose. When a man learns, for example, that the first part in *bondman, bondage*, has nothing to do with bonds for binding a captive, but that it is substantially the same word as *band* in *husband, husbandman, husbandry*; are we to suppose that such knowledge in his mind will never influence him in writing so as to make him either put the word in or leave it out? And yet the utility of Etymology is not by any means universally admitted by those belletristic persons who take English Literature for their province. Some of them are still of the same mind with Dugald Stewart, who maintained that etymological investigations are 'unfavourable to elegance of composition.' He meant to say that a writer must shield his mind from new associations, for fear lest he should disturb the old ones;—and thus it is that 'elegance' degenerates into a thin and poverty-stricken conventionality. Whereas the fact is, a man who would keep his mind fresh must keep it active; he must not be content with the old stores, nor passively receive the stream of daily additions; he must be enterprising. He must investigate something; and what can a literary man better investigate than the language he is continually employing? It is not always possible to trace by analysis the relation of cause and effect in those beneficial influences which systematic study brings to bear on the mind. This remark applies more or less to each of the three branches of Philology now considered. We cannot well assign the measure and manner of their operation as mental culture;

and yet I am persuaded that every one of these linguistic investigations may be instrumental for the improvement of English Prose.

In this connection, it may be useful to quote a passage in which Professor W. Scherer, no mean judge, touches incidentally on the favourable influence which style may win from those habits of mind which are induced by philological studies.

> A really cultivated style of writing now arose, though at the same time there were not wanting those who followed Klopstock's example in experimenting with the language, and attained a certain uncouth originality. But side by side with these bunglers there were a few writers, like Jacob Grimm for example, who had a natural instinct for language, and who, by appreciative study of their native dialect, and thorough understanding of the hidden laws and forces of speech, developed a truly creative power of language.—*History of German Literature*, by W. Scherer, tr. Mrs. Conybeare, ii. 232.

To the three branches of Philology above described we may venture to add a fourth, one which is little recognized as yet, and perhaps for the very reason that it has more of a mental character than the former three, and has closer affinities with the art of literary composition.

4. This fourth and last division of Philology I have called Sēmantique or Sēmantology by a title borrowed from the French philologers. If I may trust my memory on this point, it was from the writings of M. Michel Bréal that I first adopted the term. Here we are on ground where we may hope to conciliate the belletristic literary man.[1] For, although I comprise this branch under the head of Philology, it really is not scientific enough to offend anybody. It is like some outlying unreclaimed ground that has been enclosed and so linked on to the arable fields, with the view of sending the plough into it some future day. Not that it is in a state of nature either, for no part of Philology (in the larger sense) has really had more numerous efforts expended upon it. But it has all been done by hand;—mere

[1] And yet I would not be too sanguine. Appeal may be made to Dugald Stewart, who maintained that 'it is better in many instances to remain ignorant of the original meaning of words than to know it.'

spade-husbandry. From the very dawn of literary education, it has been the most universal aim alike of teacher and of student to ascertain the variable meanings of words in the standards of literature. The whole pedigree of the Latin Dictionary has been devoted to this more than to any other end. Johnson was the first to take in hand this task for English. Since his day there has been no great effort of the kind until now in the *New English Dictionary* under the editorship of Dr. Murray. Perhaps the best completed example of the Sēmantique of a language is afforded by the Dictionary of the French Academy.

The latest efforts do not encourage the idea that this branch of Philology will speedily receive the stamp of scientific exactitude. A germ of Science may be discerned perhaps in the processes for ascertaining the line of movement, so as to answer the question—Which was the earliest sense and what was the order of the sequence?

There are two ways in which this subject may be approached. We may either begin with an idea and observe its proneness to association with any contiguous idea, and this elective affinity we may pursue through many forms of word-clothing either in the same language or in divers languages. Thus, if we take the idea of a line of demarcation, a boundary line; we shall find that it readily merges in the contiguous idea of the area inclosed by such a line. The word *mark*, in Anglo-Saxon *mearc*, never in this island passed beyond that primary sense (of line) which is now colloquially attached to the word. But on the continent, in its Latin form of *marca*, it came to mean a property bounded by certain limits, a farm, an estate. The word *terminus*, boundary, passed through the same semantic transition, and *terminus* in Frankish documents means a farm. The English word *town* meant at first a fence for enclosure, as the same word in German (Z a u n) does to this day. This German word has never got any further, but our Anglo-Saxon *tún* from meaning fence, passed on to signify the fenced area, which was first a yard about a farm-stead, and thence to the group of houses which collected about it and was the germ of the modern 'town.' So in classic Latin *fines*, the bounds of a political state, was mostly known as a word for

the national territory. The word *enclosure* in its first sense meant the act of surrounding or fencing an area, but now it is mostly understood to mean the area enclosed. Here we have been following the fortunes of a small and tangible idea and observing how readily, under divers forms of word-clothing, it allies itself to another idea which is contiguous in the physical order of nature.

But the more usual process in Semantology is to begin with a word and to trace its catalogue of meanings, as in the *New English Dictionary*, edited by Dr. Murray. The exuberant growth of thought and association which has gathered about many a word is part of the rich heritage of the man of letters. What is confused material to the man of science is wealth to *him*. He need not trouble himself about the arithmetical amount or the chronological order of the shades of meaning; he has it all, like colours upon his palette, to choose from, and create with. In the Tables at the head of this Treatise, while the immediate object was to exhibit the *copia verborum*, the wealth and choice of words, there was another sort of wealth less prominently displayed, namely, the wealth of senses that lies couched in many a word, a resource which has the effect in practice of multiplying that numerous array to a higher power and compass.

One of the most important lessons to be learnt from the Tables in the First Chapter is the fact that the area of thought represented by a word is not rigid but elastic. In thus introducing what may sound too much like an abstract and philosophical consideration, I shall hope not to appear to be wandering from my subject, seeing that a writer of such acknowledged merit as Mr. R. L. Stevenson has introduced it in the same connection. Indeed, from the very circumstance that he has done so it becomes incumbent upon me to follow him, because I think he has failed to set this matter in its true light. When I question any position of a writer so deservedly admired as Mr. R. L. Stevenson I feel the act to be venturesome; but I shield myself under the principle enunciated above, that the artist is not always the best interpreter of the philosophy of his craft. In 1885 Mr. Stevenson wrote

a brilliant article in the *Contemporary Review* 'On Style in Literature,' in the course of which he said :—

> The sister arts enjoy the use of a plastic and ductile material, like the modeller's clay; literature alone is condemned to work in mosaic with finite and quite rigid words. You have seen those blocks dear to the nursery: this one a pillar, that a pediment, a third a window or a vase. It is with blocks of just such arbitrary size and figure that the literary architect is condemned to design the palace of his art.

Now I will venture to say that this is inappropriate and is apt to be misleading: and that the author seems to have been led by rhetorical warmth to exaggerate a partial and a momentary impression. To say that words are rigid as bricks, does not convey a true idea of the nature of words. If it were so, how would it be possible for single words to run through such a gamut of semantology. The successive significations grow naturally out of one another; how could that have happened if their outline of thought had been rigid? Did not this pedigree of senses develop itself precisely because the words were ductile, or germinative, precisely because they were anything but rigid? Again, if words were rigid, how would it be possible for such a situation to arise, as that which we call Verbal Fallacy? Is not this fallacy due simply to the natural and honest possibility of two men seeing a given word in two different lights, aspects, senses?

How could the word *affect* have produced, in itself and in its derivatives, such a kaleidoscope of significations? This word is from *afficere*, a compound with *ad* (to) of *facere* to do, and at first it simply meant to do something to anybody or to anything. Our verb to *affect* is a frequentative form (*affectare*), and so would convey the notion of doing it often. From the idea of doing to or acting upon an object, the word next catches the idea of effect produced; and so we say—How does this *affect* me, *i.e.* what effect or change does it produce upon me? (Out of this juncture springs a legal sense of *affect* to fix a charge upon—'unless you can affect them with fraud,' Ayliffe, quoted in Latham's Dictionary.) And so it is said (passively) that a person is very much *affected* by a touching

event, *i.e.* a change is produced in him. But the force of the frequentative form has a tendency to assert itself yet more explicitly, inasmuch as the notion of doing a thing often runs hard upon the notion of doing it with a passionate desire, and so to *affect* is to like, to be pleased with, to love, as in 'a lady whom I affect'—*Two Gent.* iii. 1. 82. Indeed, it is so frequent in Shakspeare as to need no further exemplification; yet we may recall the familiar example from *Hudibras*—a 'Babylonish dialect, which modern pedants much affect.' At this juncture the substantive *affection* branches off. Then, by a short step, it next signifies 'aspire to,' as 'Have I affected wealth or honour?' —*Hen. VI.* 2nd Part, iv. 7. 104—but short and obvious as this step seems, it opens a new vista, for the notion of aspiring to borders upon that of pretending to, and so we arrive at that very familiar use of *affect* in the sense of imitate, make believe; as when Congreve says of a coquette that she is 'affecting to seem unaffected,' out of which branches the substantive *affectation*. From this again the rarer sense of 'resemble,' as 'the accent of his tongue affecteth him'—*King John* i. 1. 186.

If words had not been rather malleable in their nature, how could it have come to pass that the adverb 'awfully' has by familiar usage or rather abuse been flattened down in so short a time to the defaced and expressionless bauble which now so ineffectually flaunts it about our ears?

But while words are not in their nature rigid, there is an endless difference of degree in the conditions and habits of words in this respect. Some words are more rigid than others simply as a matter of habit due to circumstances. Some words are attached to an external visible object which stamps the thought they awaken; some few are attached to ideas of a singular and incommunicable nature. Hence it is that certain words remain throughout the ages in a wonderful state of immobility. Here is an Alphabet of such:—*ash, bridge, child, death, eye, fire, gift, house, ice, kin, life, man, need, oak, path, quern, rain, snow, tree, vine, water, yew*. These words appear to have a fixity of outline which may seem to justify the term rigid, and yet I doubt whether that term would be philosophically true, that is, whether it would set the mind

in the right attitude for apprehending the nature of that phenomenon of fixity.

How differently conditioned words are in this respect may be seen by observation within the small circle of the Symbolics. On the one hand there are the Personal Pronouns *I, thou, he, she, it, we, ye, they* ; and the Demonstratives *this, that* ; words on which a thousand years, however time may have changed their external form, have made no impression upon their incidence of thought. The only one of this list which has been modified in thought is *they*. But if we turn from these to the Prepositions, we see a difference. If we look back a thousand years over the usage of *at, by, but, from, of, on, to, with*, we shall see that not one of these has the same area of application now as it had but a few centuries ago.

The difference in fixity between these two groups may be illustrated by a comparison of American usage with that of the old country. I am not aware of any American divergence from us in the application of the Personal Pronouns, but unfamiliar uses of Prepositions do sometimes greet our eyes when we are perusing the literature of our cousins. Thus:—

> They sat down now on the rectory porch.—Margaret Deland, *John Ward, Preacher*, c. 2.

And not only is this difference observable in words or groups of words, but the observation is capable of a wider extension, for it may be said that the habits of whole languages differ in this respect. Thus, if we compare French with German, we shall see cause to conclude that the German vocabulary must on the whole be of a more rigid habit than the French. For, how else could it come to pass, what I presume every reader will admit, that the language which has the smaller number of words has the larger power and the freer command of expression? I cannot here be taken to say anything injurious to the patriotic sensibilities of the Fatherland, because I assume it as axiomatic, that no nation upon earth can suppose that their language equals the French in aptness and flexibility and expressive power. How then, I ask, could this be, unless there were degrees of ductility, and one nation had more, another less of this quality, in the

habitual use of its vocabulary—how could this be, if words in their nature were rigid as nursery blocks?

The faculty of variation in the sense of words is correlative to the faculty of diversified combination. The same set of words grouped one way mean very differently from the same words when otherwise grouped. There is the widest difference between 'It is' and 'Is it?' And this placement-difference, here so concentrated, transforming a whole sentence, takes place also in detail and runs out into minute and subtle ramifications. Dr. Johnson in his Dictionary, at the close of his long article on the word Take, appended this note:—'This verb, like *prendre* in French, is used with endless multiplicity of relations. Its uses are so numerous, that they cannot easily be exemplified; and its references to the words governed by it so general and lax, that they can hardly be explained by any succedaneous terms. But commonly that is hardest to explain which least wants explanation. I have expanded this word to a wide diffusion, which, I think, is all that could be done.'

A like diversity may be seen in the Particles. There are many verbs compounded with *up* in the poets, which are never found in prose. Thus *upcast* (Dryden), *updraw* (Milton), *upgather* (Spenser), *upgrow* (Milton), *upheave* (Sackville), *uphoard* (Shakspeare), *uplay* (Donne), *uplead* (Milton), *uplift* (Sh., Pope), *uplock* (Sh.), *upraise* (Milton), *uprear* (Gay), *uprise* (Sh., Spenser, Cowley), *uproll* (Milton), *uproot* (Dryden), *uprouse* (Sh.). And so we come to *upset*, upon which there is something to be said, which will fitly close the paragraph. Here we have the peculiar phenomenon that while we possess the separable form *set up* it is not equivalent to *upset*, but very different, almost opposite. There was a time when *upset* did mean *set up*, when these were merely two forms of expression for the same thing. And this is the historical and literary, as it is the normal, sense of *upset*. Thus Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*, Book v.:

> Ther sċholdë be tofore his bed,
> A bord upset and fairë spred.

The sense of *upset* with which we are most familiar,

namely, to overturn, is a recent usage, and is condemned by Todd as 'a low word.' This incongruity of signification between *upset* and *set up* has proved a snare to Germans who speak English. I knew a German who had been long resident in England, indeed all the best years of his life, who for ordinary purposes spoke English perfectly. He was a connoisseur in German wines, and being a very hospitable man he liked to see his wine appreciated, and he said one day by way of assuring a guest of the harmless quality of some Hock that was on the table: 'You might drink a bottle of it, and it would not set you up.'

The illimitable diversifiability of language is the very life of that almost infinite range of variety which makes the aptness of speech for literary use. But in proportion to this self-multiplying Protean power is the difficulty of ascertaining and defining the exact value of words at every turn; and it sometimes happens that a baffled inquirer is moved to impatience as if some injustice were inflicted upon him when he finds some word not constantly adhering to the sense with which for him it had been once invested. And if the word is some very small and familiar one, it is all the more irritating. In this connection I will relate something which happened. A very old friend of mine, a man of classical education and one who knew the knowledge of his time, one day asked me a question about the Subjunctive Mood. The question rose out of a Lecture by Prof. Sonnenschein which was reported in the *Journal of Education*, where the Professor said that in the sentence 'if he had done it, it had been better' both verbs were in the Subjunctive; but that in the sentence 'if he had loved her before, he now adored her' they were both in the Indicative. My friend asked me upon this, what made the difference in these cases between *had* in the Subjunctive, and *had* in the Indicative? His difficulty (I answered) rose from the notion that a Subjunctive Mood depended upon government by a conjunction or some other visible arrangement of the sentence. Yes, to be sure, said he, so he had been taught, and he had no other idea. Then I pointed out to him that under the little word *if* two very different senses were couched; the first *if* being hypothetical, while the second was

equivalent to *whereas*. Then why, asked he, not *say* whereas? Thus do people sometimes impatiently abjure the variability of words like the boy's renunciation of the eel that was too slippery for his hold. They would like words to have fixed senses, and then forsooth people would know what they were about, and thus language would be scientific as Volapük, and rigid as nursery bricks.

It does not follow because a man is a good writer that therefore his general ideas about language will be sound and trustworthy. One of the most skilful writers that ever handled the English language was Dean Swift, and yet when he wrote a *Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English Tongue*, he did not reason very wisely. He did not indeed think with Mr. Stevenson that words were rigid as bricks, but he longed to make them so. He would fain have an Academy to fix and determine and control that of which freedom from restraint is the very essence and life. Hear Dr. Johnson in his Life of Swift, what he thought of such a project: 'The certainty and stability which, contrary to all experience, he thinks attainable, he proposes to secure by instituting an academy; the decrees of which every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud, to disobey; and which, being renewed by successive elections, would in a short time have differed from itself.'

I think it necessary to add, that Swift's idea of an Academy to fix the language is quite a different thing from the Academy advocated by Mr. M. Arnold, which was to guide the public in matters of literary taste. In proportion as the two things seem from their contiguity to be easily confounded, it is the more important to call attention to the fact that, near as they lie to one another, they have no one thing in common. Swift's idea was chimerical; Mr. Arnold's, on the contrary, whatever may be thought of its expediency, is at least perfectly sane and practicable.

But, if Mr. Stevenson's philosophy of language cannot be accepted, there is one quality in his doctrine to which I must do honour. He is, I believe, in this as in his other delineations, an excellent interpreter. He has pictured in sharp and telling outlines what thousands of educated people

semi-consciously think, or what without thinking they act upon. Much of the translation that is done, and much of the theory of translation that is abroad, would appear to repose upon some such a notion as this of the rigidity of words. This it is that degrades translation in the general esteem, and causes it to be spoken of in contemptuous language as 'journeyman work.' It makes translation appear an easy because a mechanical operation. You have only to match your words, and every time the same word occurs in the original, put the same English in the translation. And although there is no translator who finds it possible to keep to this in practice, yet this need not hinder him from keeping to it in theory, or from evaluing his own translations and those of other people by a false standard. Were this a sound theory of translation, it would follow that in this particular operation there were hardly any place for Choice of Words. Mr. Sydney Smith was a hearty supporter of Hamilton's Method of Teaching Languages, and he wrote an Article in the *Edinburgh Review* (June 1826) warmly advocating it, yet at the same time he disavowed all participation in Hamilton's doctrine when he put forth a theory of translation. Hamilton's words are worth quoting, as exhibiting the unreserved expression of the rigid theory.

> I have said that each word is translated by its *one sole* undeviating meaning, assuming as an incontrovertible principle in all languages that, with very few exceptions, each word has one meaning only, and can usually be rendered correctly into another by one word only, which one word should serve for its representative at all times and on all occasions.

But while I dissent from Mr. Stevenson's criticism in this matter, I seem at the same time to find the expression on his part quite natural and genuine, and I think that I am able to understand it. Mr. Stevenson is an artist, and he looks at words as an artist looks at his material, and the quality which he seeks in that material is pliability, a readiness to follow, to fit, to subserve, and to represent his thought. In proportion to the intensity of his expectation will be the slowness of his satisfaction, and words being never quite so prompt and supple as artistic impatience demands, it is only

natural the artist should frown a little and call them rigid. This comes of looking at words with the exaction of an artist's eye.

The eye of Science also looks at them; and from that eye we get the very opposite report. If there is in the linguistic philosophy of Prof. Max Müller one sentence that can be indicated as dominant over all the rest, it is this;—that words are yielding, passive, ductile, impressible, obsequious to thought, unstable, almost fluid. The softness of the verbal element renders it too prone to metaphor and mythology, and furnishes the nidus of the worst ailment under which Language labours and languishes. Hence the greatest disqualification of Language to support the mind in the processes of exact thought. The disease is so serious as to demand a remedy. Prof. Max Müller has discovered one; it is Definition. Language requires to be stiffened; it wants starch, to make it more fixed and erect and rigid; and this starch is provided for us in the resources of Definition.

In what new manner Definition is to be applied does not appear. Shall we have an Academy for Definition, as in Dean Swift's *Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English Tongue*? Certainly the old manner, from Plato down, has not been completely successful. The defined or technical values of terms are not easy for disciples to retain, and even the master himself has been known to bolt over his own fence. This defining scheme is a well-known source of fallacy. The natural is always seeking to return, and it is so insidious that the artificial is hardly a match for it. In Science and Philosophy this artificial device is justified by necessity; but that any one should propose to put this Definition-check upon words in the freer intercourse of literature, is hardly imaginable.—Here it may be as well to observe, that the so-called Definitions, i.e. the meanings assigned to words in Dictionaries, are not Definitions in the sense of this discussion.

This remedy has indeed been welcomed by Sir James Stephen, who testifies that in his own department of Law, such a remedy is greatly to be desired. But even in the special area of jurisprudence, while Sir James Stephen is ready to

hail its approach, he does not seem to augur that it will work a cure. The great word 'Law' itself (he complains) has been satisfactorily defined by Mr. John Austin, but writers do not guide themselves by this Definition, and it appears that Prof. Max Müller himself is one of the most signal offenders. How then shall we hope that the unscientific minds of the literary world in general will be kept up to the mark of a Code of Definitions? But the very proposal is monumental. The point to be noted is the proposal itself, the fact that such a remedy has been proposed, and proposed by our chief authority in the Science of Language;—this is a fact of such weight as effectually to counterbalance the attribution of rigidity to words. If the remedy is one that must in the nature of things be ineffectual, then the testimony is only the more telling, in proportion as the effort is more desperate and the disease more hopeless. In that case, there is no conclusion for us, but only this, that words are soft and malleable things, and there is no near prospect that they will admit any wide or considerable alteration in their nature.

There was a time, and that time is within the memory of men still active, when glacier ice was supposed to be rigid. The investigations of scientific men, especially those of Tyndall, have satisfied all men that they are fluid. But when all is said, it remains that rigid and fluid are relative terms; a substance may be fluid in one respect and yet rigid in another; and as to words, no doubt many a writer has experienced their rigidity, and Mr. Stevenson will find hearty adherents enough. It is only by patience, and continued practice, and familiarity with good authors, that words grow pliant to the writer's pen.

We may then set these two views of language over against one another, and, accepting the measure of truth contained in each, let both of them find correction in their own reciprocal elimination of error. For, if words are not quite so rigid as nursery bricks, they certainly are quite rigid enough to task all the artist's skill when he would persuade them to discover their softer side; and on the other hand, if the fickleness of words is not exactly disease, it is certainly at times troublesome enough to provoke the philosopher to call

in the restraints of Definition. Under these intermediate conditions of texture, neither too hard nor too soft, but yielding to art and ductile in competent hands, the writer (who would be worthy of the name) must endeavour to develop the boundless capabilities of language.

Analysis is the general purport of all that has been said hitherto:—with the next chapter we enter upon the Synthesis, that is to say the constructive aspect, of English Prose.

CHAPTER V

THE LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF PROSE DICTION

§ 1. Of Elevation.—(*a*) Prose Diction must not have the pitch of Poetic diction —The question concerning Prose Poetry;—Professor Masson—Sir Philip Sidney—Clarendon—Prose receives nourishment from Poetry—Matthew Arnold, E. A. Freeman, Carlyle—Prose and Poetry not to be blended—Imitation of biblical diction;—(*b*) Prose Diction is distinct from Colloquial Diction—Leigh Hunt and Macaulay—Sydney Smith, Lord Grimthorpe—Hallam's horror of slang—Prose writing requires a moderate Elevation—Relation of the Subjunctive Mood to Elevation—Baldness—The Saga Literature—Elevation lowered by design.

§ 2. Of Lucidity.—Its relation to Grammar. Observations on (*a*) some Presentives:—Adjective—Adverb (placement of Adverb—Mr. Donnelly)—Participle;—(*b*) some Symbolics—Personal Pronoun—Interjection—Relation of the Subjunctive Mood to Lucidity.

§ 3. Of Variety.—Variety of word, of phrase, of idiom—Carlyle—Phrase and Compound—Variety of collocation—Variety of sentence—Short sentences—Negation of variety; Jeremy Bentham's theory—Volapük—Chaucer's Prose Tales—Apophthegmatic use of the Simplex—Various composition of the Paragraph—Paragraph versus Sentence—The long sentence—Flexibility.

This amphibious way of writing is neither one nor the other of those two between which there seems no medium; and perhaps was not thought of when the answer of *Sir H. Savil* or *Spelman* (I forget which of 'em) was thought a very pleasant one, who, being asked his opinion of Poetry, replied, that of all ways of writing he liked it the best next to Prose.—John Constable, *Reflections upon Accuracy of Style* (1731), Dialogue ii.

In the foregoing chapters our subject has been viewed in four different aspects, each of them important, but all partial and incomplete. In the first chapter we considered the resources for choice of expression, in the second the cultivation of the grammatical sense, in the third some contrivances for harmonizing the mechanical presentment with the course of thought, and in the fourth the elements which conspire to the significance of words. We will now endeavour to take a more comprehensive view, and consider English Prose in its entire presentation, in the arment it wears to appear in public.

There are two things to be noticed here:—in the first place we think in and by the help of language, and language is the natural vesture of our thought, because in fact it is born with the thought itself. But when we come to write for publication we become aware of another personality besides our own, a very imposing and aggregate personality, namely our audience the public. This lays us under the necessity of considering how we may most respectfully, decorously, and advantageously present our thoughts, for we must not write exactly everything as we have thought it out, but we should robe for the public eye. There is a conventional garb, a costume, which long experience has developed and justified; and to acquire ease in this costume and familiarity with it—in this consists the apprenticeship of the writer. This conventional garb is the Diction of Prose.[1]

Prose stands contrasted by its freedom of manner from Poetry, and it is easy for the inexperienced to drift into a notion, that Poetry is writing under strict rules, and that Prose is just writing without rules, writing anyhow. But this would be a great mistake. The real difference is that the rules of Poetry are few and comparatively rigid, and therefore they are easy to formulate; while the rules of Prose are vague, elastic, indefinitely numerous, and contingent upon a multitude of relative considerations. To summarize the Art of Writing Prose in a code of rules would be something like trying to do the same for the Art of behaving in the intercourse of the world. This is a matter in which it is easier to indicate principles, than to lay down rules. In Poetry it is possible to make a brief list of rules; but in regard to Prose it is only possible to offer some discourse upon the multitudinous constraints to which it is subject:—we can only just talk, as I may say, about Prose Diction.

§ 1. Of Elevation.

I must begin by asserting my deliberate conviction, after all debate past and present, that the distinction between Poetry and Prose is one which is seated in the nature of things, that it is not a superficial or accidental difference of form, but

[1] In the technical language of the Greek rhetoricians *περιβολή*.

that it is a profound and essential organic distinction. Both indeed have grown and developed upon one root, both are nourished from the same source, both are organized out of the same elements, and yet they differ from one another, not in degree merely, but in kind. In both there is a combination of the reasoning with the imaginative faculty, but the proportions and the manner of this combination are so different as to result in organic products which are diverse in genus. Poetry, which is the organ of Imagination, is futile without the support of Reason; Prose, which is the organ of Reason, has no vivacity or beauty or artistic value but with the favour and sympathy of the Imagination. As I have reason to apprehend that this statement of the case will seem too emphatic and incisive to some critics who merit and command respect, it may be not superfluous to arm myself with the double-barreled authority of the following sentence, excerpted from a paragraph by Mr. Matthew Arnold which is to be quoted more at large in the sequel. 'Poetry has a different *logic*, as Coleridge said, from prose; poetical style follows another law of evolution than the style of prose.' More need not be said.

When I assert that the distinction between Poetic Diction and Prose Diction is seated in the nature of things, I am not committing myself to any opinion about Wordsworth's contention that Poetry ought to be independent of poetic diction. That Poetry can be written with more or less avoidance of poetic diction, may be taken for granted. But even if Poetry is not dependent for its existence upon poetic diction, yet it is certain that a peculiar and separate diction is the natural concomitant of poetry, a natural consequence of the traditional cultivation of the Art of Poetry, and this being so, it is evidence of a radical difference between poetry and prose. As for the interest of prose with which we are now concerned, it is beyond doubt that prose requires an independent sphere and insists upon a distinct uniform; and that it must be (as a general rule) unmixed with those peculiarities of diction which are associated with poetry.

The tyro in the Art of Writing is apt to run into poetical diction. Partly it is because the literary stores in his memory are most probably from the poets; but partly also from the fact

that first efforts are exciting to the imagination, and urge the beginner to aspire too high. Therefore the first rule in good prose writing is this:—not to be poetical. What makes this rule the more remarkable is the seemingly incompatible observation, that nothing is better as a discipline for writing good prose than the study of the poets. It seems a sort of antinomy to say that poetry is an excellent preparation for prose, and yet prose must not be poetical. But so it is. Prose diction has a proper elevation of its own, but not a poetical elevation. Poetry soars; Prose moves upon the ground;—it moves with dignity, but it does not spurn the ground.

It is a corollary from this that as a general rule sober words should be chosen in preference to those which are elevated or romantic. The young writer should not write *brethren* for brothers, should not call a horse a *charger*, or a *palfrey*, or a *steed*; should not write *welkin* for sky, or *whilome* for once, or *ere* for before, or *vale* for valley, or *thrall* for slave, or *thraldom* for slavery. I may be answered that Scott in *Ivanhoe* calls Gurth a 'thrall,' and that the same writer uses many words that border on the poetical. My reply is that Scott's art was Romance, and that Romance is a sort of border-land between poetry and prose. And further, it should be said, that all precepts here given are addressed to the discretion of the reader for his own verification or modification; and that the nature of the subject does not admit of rules so exact as in a treatise of arithmetic. In the Comparison of Adjectives, there is the form *lesser* which is used in the English Bible, and is still a very admissible word in Poetry. Nevertheless, we may not use it in ordinary prose; we are not at liberty to write 'in a lesser degree'—it must be, 'in a less degree.' Then, in Adverbs, there are certain ones that hover on the border of romance, whose ticket of entry into sober prose is rather questionable. Such is the adverb 'fain' for willingly, gladly; and such is 'still' when used in the high literary sense of constantly or repeatedly.

Also, one would so fain both fly and not fly; play one's card and have it to play.—T. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, II. iii. 6.

Under this head comes the general rule—that we are not

so free in prose as in poetry to use simple Adjectives adverbially, without the adverbial ensign *-ly*.[1]

All archaic expressions have an affinity with poetry, and are accordingly unsuited for prose, except under special circumstances. We may admire the language of Hooker, but we may not indiscriminately adopt it.

> The chiefest instrument of human communion therefore is speech, because thereby we impart mutually one to another the conceits of our reasonable understanding.—*Of the Laws &c.* I. x. 12.

This is charming; and in Hooker it was proper, because it was natural. With us such writing would be affected, unreal, and quaint. It would be a surface elaboration, which, except in specific instances, is incompatible with good writing.

In connection with the Relative *that*, there is an archaic turn which sometimes though rarely appears in modern prose; but which, when it does appear, is of almost magical effect in the matter of elevation. In early times two *that's* might be seen together, the first a Demonstrative and the second a Relative; and 'that that' was used where present usage says 'that which.' To obviate the tediousness of repeating the same word, a habit arose of using *that* by itself as a condensation of *that that*, much as we now use *what*. In 1 Kings x. 15 'besides *that* he had of the merchantmen' is in the late Revision expressed thus—'besides *that which* the chapman brought.' In Matt. xviii. 28, 'pay me that thou owest' is modernized to 'pay *what* thou owest'; and in xx. 14 'take that thine is' is transformed into 'take up that which is thine.' This old feature of syntax is not quite extinct, but it is archaic and venerable. It was rather startling to meet with the following sentence in so popular a vehicle as *The Times*.

> Formerly archæology in Italy cared for that it conveyed away, and little or nothing for that it left.

Diction so unusual, so stately, fixed the attention, and compelled a careful perusal of the whole Article. The composi-

[1] This feature will call for fuller notice in the Chapter on Idiom.

tion was hardly less unlike the typical Leader, than this excerpted sentence. The whole was in keeping. It was an Article rich in thought, rather than fluent in delivery. There was that about it which led me to divine that perhaps some contributor extraordinary had volunteered or had been impressed, at the moment of a remarkable discovery on the site of the ancient Sybaris, to give the readers of *The Times* a first-hand view of the state of Italian archæology. My guess was entirely founded upon internal evidence, that is to say, upon the style of discourse, of which I proceed to give a longer extract, because it serves to illustrate our present topic of Elevation.

Antiquarian efforts in divided Italy were spasmodic so far as the State was concerned. Archæology as a private pursuit was never dead or even dormant. A succession of patient investigators dug, conferred, and collected. Each inquirer or society of inquirers worked more or less independently, or for more or less private purposes. Usually the objects they had brought together were at intervals dispersed. At best, if the discovered treasures were preserved for the Italian public, methodical attempts to connect by their means ancient and modern Italy were unknown. Since the revival of Italian unity the State has lent its aid to that especial end. A band of trained pioneers under its patronage and supervision has been disinterring the buried past for its own sake independent of its artistic riches. Formerly archæology in Italy cared for that it conveyed away, and little or nothing for that it left. Its votaries, though animated by more generous motives, were in the consequences to a locality no better than the Arabs who pillage tombs in the Libyan desert. Their labours when most profitable were also most successful in stripping the scene of all hope of future identification with precious memories. The principle which guides modern Italian archæology under State control aims at showing what antiquity was as well as what it produced. Visitors to places such as our Correspondent mentions to-day used to have them described by allusions to the spoils from them which have enriched museums. One was memorable for its vase, another for its exquisite cinerary urn or sarcophagus. At present the tendency is to inspect a collection of antiquities for the interest it adds to, and the light it sheds on, the region in which they were found. Gradually the superincumbent earth is being lifted from the entire face of bygone Italy. The past in its material characteristics is being substantially and integrally revealed.—*The Times*, June 2, 1888.

Succinctness and brevity carried to an extreme trend upon the edge of poetic diction. It is of the nature of prose to be full and explicit, and it does not share with poetry the unlimited privilege of ellipse and compression. The following, from Washington Irving's *Life and Voyages of Columbus*, Book vii. c. 4, exhibits an ellipse more fit for Mr. Robert Browning's poetry than for sober prose:—'thinking that they might esteem themselves fortunate should they be able to return from whence they came.' Elsewhere, he exhibits condensations of structure which are verily hydraulic; such as 'to whomsoever should,' which repeatedly appears in this popular and attractive historian. Here we see a nominative and accusative conjunct: the accusative case after the preposition being compressed into the selfsame word with the nominative to the ensuing verb 'should.' Thus, in the same work:

He thought it probable they would make land that very night; he ordered, therefore, a vigilant look-out to be kept from the forecastle, promising to whomsoever should make the discovery, a doublet of velvet, in addition to the pension to be given by the sovereigns.—B. iii. c. 4.

This he sealed and directed to the king and queen; superscribing a promise of a thousand ducats to whomsoever should deliver the packet unopened.—B. v. c. 2.

It is no justification for a prose author of the nineteenth century to say that like compression is found in classics of the seventeenth. Such may no doubt be found, e.g.—

'Ready to live by them, or to die at their feet, against whomsoever should in any sort illegally attempt upon them.'—Clarendon, *History*, iv. 200.

Much of the charm of good prose depends upon mere explicitness. This is the natural result of clear intelligence and open unembarrassed communication. A writer in whom this quality may advantageously be observed is Prof. Max Müller, whose prose savours of German in no other respect but in this one of explicitness. And it is moreover an explicitness very unlike German explicitness; it has been smoothed out and rendered sleek by the advantage of French culture.

Prose insists upon its distinct office and independent character, not only in regard to all the particular features above enumerated, but also in that which is of the widest comprehension, namely, in Rhythm. On this point Mr. R. L. Stevenson says :—

> The rule of scansion in verse is to suggest no measure but the one in hand; in prose, to suggest no measure at all. Prose must be rhythmical, and it may be as much so as you will; but it must not be metrical. It may be anything, but it must not be verse.—*Contemporary Review*, vol. xlvii. (1885) p. 555.

The same thing was signified in that Latin designation of Prose, *oratio soluta*, an expression which had reference to Verse, and characterized Prose by a negation of that which is the most conspicuous feature in versification. It meant to say 'unmetrical diction.' Another expression, and one that went deeper into the marrow of the subject, was *sermo* or *oratio pedestris*, speech on foot, language that walks and does not profess to fly. This was a more ancient designation; it was borrowed from the Greek.[1]

There has been from time to time an attempt to maintain that Prose and Poetry are not radically distinct from one another, that the passage from one to the other is always possible because of a natural affinity between the two; and that there is an intermediate form of composition, which claims to be recognized as a true species, and which has been called Prose Poetry. This rests upon a theory, that Poetry is only a heightened form of Prose, and that the prose writer, if lifted into a higher and more imaginative mood, may in effect write Poetry, without quitting the form of Prose, or submitting to any of the conditions which (superficially, as it is said) distinguish Poetry from Prose. This argument has recently been revived with great vigour by Professor David Masson in an Introduction to 'The English Mail Coach' by De Quincey, where the reader may find all that can be said on that side of the debate said admirably well. Professor Masson is not satisfied with De Quincey's designation of his own prose as 'impassioned prose'; he would rather call it 'imaginative

[1] Πεζῇ μοι φράσον, Talk to me in prose!—Plat. *Soph.* 237 A.

prose, prose phantasy, or, if the name had not been thrown unnecessarily into disrepute, prose poetry.' To show the fervour of his conviction, I will quote a few lines.

> A very common, if not a very prevalent opinion is that Prose and Verse are separated from each other by a great gulf, and that their rights and functions are totally different. . . . This, or something like this, is the common apprehension. There cannot, I believe, be a greater mistake, or one more disastrous to true literature.—*Select Essays of Thomas De Quincey*, vol. ii. p. 148.

That Poetry and Prose may often approximate, may catch something of each other's manner, may even at times seem almost to blend, is not enough to disprove them species distinct in their nature. There are strange occasional mimicries played off between the animal and the vegetable world; there are caterpillars that look like bits of dead stick; there is a moment when the two great divisions of organic life blend indistinguishably in the Zoophyte; but no one, I think, not even the most determined upholder of spontaneous generation, would venture to deny that they 'are separated from each other by a great gulf, and that their rights and functions are totally different.' That there was a moment when Poetry and Prose were not yet distinguishable, I do not doubt; but it was so long ago, as to be quite below the horizon of our modern apprehension.

The necessity of observing the distinction between the diction of poetry and that of prose has not been at all times equally felt and acknowledged;—it is characteristic of a mature and well-developed literature, when this separation is firmly established and universally understood. In its first stages a prose literature is not yet disentangled from that poetry which has occupied the whole field of literature hitherto; and again in times of literary decay, the prose is apt to get mingled with crude touches of poetry. This is well known to those who are acquainted with the later classics and with the Latin writers of the Dark Ages. The prose of the whole Silver Age, from Tacitus down to Boëthius is deeply tinctured with manifest Poetry. The great prose author of the eighth century is our Venerable Bede; he is in every respect the best writer of those ages; but even he, when he warms with his

subject, is apt to import whole phrases of Virgil. The cause is manifest; it belongs to the immortality of poetry. Prose is essentially a thing of the present; poetry is for all time. In times of literary decay there are no prose models; those who have literature at all have it from the old poets.

The bold and clear distinction between Prose and Poetry has always been a character of periods of maturity, just as on the other hand the commingling of the two has belonged to undeveloped periods or times of relapse, decay, and transition. The prose of our own Elizabethan period, which was a period of literary agitation and unsettlement and new experiment both in Prose and Poetry, often exhibits a vacillation between the characteristics of these two chief literary types. A good place to observe this character is in the *Arcadia* of Sir Philip Sidney.

In the following quotation from that romance I do not know whether it would be fair to object to the Saxon Genitives, 'the time's haste . . . the way's length . . . the wind's advertisements'—because these were perhaps not yet so distinctly poetic elements as they are in our day. But such continuous personification as 'children of summer . . . the guiltless earth . . . a silly fugitive . . . believing the wind's advertisements' is quite incompatible with that sobriety which is of the very life of prose, and which essentially distinguishes it from poetry. I know it is a question of degree, and tastes may differ. It is quite natural and orderly that prose should from time to time make the essay how much of poetic instinct it can take up into itself without derogation to its own independent character, and in respect of such an experimental effort, the *Arcadia* may well stand for the prose-type of a great era of transition.

O, said he, you will never live to my age, without you keep yourself in breath with exercise, and in heart with joyfulness; too much thinking doth consume the spirits; and oft it falls out, that, while one thinks too much of his doing, he leaves to do the effect of his thinking. Then spared he not to remember, how much Arcadia was changed since his youth; activity and good-fellowship being nothing in the price it was then held in; but, according to the nature of the old-growing world, still worse and worse. Then

would he tell them stories of such gallants as he had known; and so, with pleasant company, beguiled the time's haste, and shortened the way's length, till they came to the side of the wood, where the hounds were in couples, staying their coming, but with a whining accent craving liberty; many of them in colour and marks so resembling, that it shewed they were of one kind. The huntsmen handsomely attired in their green liveries, as though they were children of summer, with staves in their hands to beat the guiltless earth, when the hounds were at a fault; and with horns about their necks, to sound an alarm upon a silly fugitive: the hounds were straight uncoupled, and ere long the stag thought it better to trust to the nimbleness of his feet than to the slender fortification of his lodging; but even his feet betrayed him, for, howsoever they went, they themselves uttered themselves to the scent of their enemies, who, one taking it of another, and sometimes believing the wind's advertisements, sometimes the view of their faithful counsellors the huntsmen, with open mouths, then denounced war, when war was already begun; their cry being composed of so well-sorted mouths, that any man would perceive therein some kind of proportion, but the skilful woodmen did find a music. Then delight and variety of opinion drew the horsemen sundry ways, yet cheering their hounds with voice and horn, kept still as it were together. The wood seemed to conspire with them against his own citizens, dispersing their noise through all his quarters; and even the nymph Echo left to bewail the loss of Narcissus, and became a hunter. But the stag was in the end so hotly pursued, that, leaving his flight, he was driven to make courage of despair; and so turning his head, made the hounds, with change of speech, to testify that he was at a bay: as if from hot pursuit of their enemy, they were suddenly come to a parley.—Sir Philip Sidney, *Arcadia*, 1580.

The critical reader of our great prose writers from Elizabeth to William III. will often have occasion to notice broad patches of poetical embellishment which we no longer permit ourselves to indulge. Of this sort is the unravelling of a metaphor to the dimensions of a poetical simile, as in the nautical similitudes of Clarendon.

He did swim in those troubled and boisterous waters, in which the duke of Buckingham rode as admiral, with a good grace, when very many who were about him were drowned, or forced on shore with shrewd hurts and bruises: which shewed he knew well how

and when to use his limbs and strength to the best advantage; sometimes only to avoid sinking, and sometimes to advance and get ground; and by this dexterity he kept his credit with those who could do him good, and lost it not with others, who desired the destruction of those upon whom he most depended.—Clarendon, *History*, i. § 104.

And yet the indiscretion of those bishops, . . . at a time when they saw all forms and rules of judgment impetuously declined; . . . that they should, in such a storm, when the best pilot was at his prayers, and the card and compass lost, without the advice of one mariner, put themselves in such a cockboat, and to be severed from their good ship, gave that scandal and offence to all those who passionately desired to preserve their function, that . . . there was only one gentleman who spoke on their behalf, and said, 'he did not believe they were guilty of high treason, but that they were stark mad; and therefore desired they might be sent to Bedlam.'—*Id.* iv. 145.

But now, after having insisted so strongly upon this point, I must make an important admission, an admission so qualifying to what has gone before, that it may almost seem an abandonment of my whole contention for the separate nature of prose and poetry. It is this. Poetry is the greatest of all sources for inspiring prose with new vitality. Prose is born of conversation, but it is enlivened and invigorated by poetry. Only then the nutritive elements, which prose draws from poetry, must for the most part be digested and assimilated, they must not remain in their elemental state of manifest poetry, they must be transformed into prose. Hence it is not easy to detach and exhibit proofs of this influence of poetry upon prose—it is an influence too pervading, too rarefied, for optical demonstration. Some evidence however of a suggestive if not of a demonstrative nature may be observed here and there. Among such I would instance the tendency of some good prose writers to win effect by adopting that old poetic device, the Refrain. A master hand in this branch of art is Mr. M. Arnold.

Nevertheless, the eighteenth century accomplished for us an immense literary progress, and its very shortcomings in poetry were an instrument to that progress, and served it. The example of

Germany may show us what a nation loses by having no prose style. The practical genius of our people could not but urge irresistibly to the production of a real prose style, because for the purposes of modern life the old English prose, the prose of Milton and Taylor, is cumbersome, unavailable, impossible. A style of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance, was wanted. These are the qualities of a serviceable prose style. Poetry has a different *logic*, as Coleridge said, from prose; poetical style follows another law of evolution than the style of prose. But there is no doubt that a style of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance, will acquire a yet stronger hold upon the mind of a nation, if it is adopted in poetry as well as in prose, and so comes to govern both. This is what happened in France. To the practical, modern, and social genius of the French, a true prose was indispensable. They produced one of conspicuous excellence, so powerful and influential in the last century, that Gibbon, as is well known, hesitated whether he should not write history in French. French prose is marked in the highest degree by the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. With little opposition from any deep-seated and imperious poetic instincts, the French made their poetry conform to the law which was moulding their prose. French poetry became marked with the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance.—*The Six Chief Lives from Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets,'* Preface.

In the *Cornhill Magazine* for February 1870 appeared an Article by Mr. M. Arnold with the title 'Puritanism and the Church of England.' This Article is composed upon his favourite plan of recurring and re-echoing phrases, which I have identified with the 'Refrain' of the old 'Balade,' but which unfriendly critics call 'catch-words.' The main elements of the argument are repeated at intervals with substantial identity and without absolute uniformity at the closings of paragraphs or sections; thus—

> Puritanism separates men from collective progress and so retards the gradual illumination of the aggregate mind: . . . the Puritans pushing the formal incorporation of their favorite doctrines, the Church resisting: . . . the Church was for keeping open, the Puritans were for narrowing.

These and some other cognate formulas recur like the ribs of some architectural fabric, which are identical one with

another in substance and in purpose, while yet no two are exactly alike in superficial form and decoration.

Another illustration of this principle I will instance. There is a poetical trope (if so it may be called), which consists in the substitution of a Description in place of a Name. It is a well-known fashion with the poets, and in particular, it may be observed, it is much used by Dante in the *Divina Commedia*. Quintilian called it *Antonomasia*; and his example is 'The man who conquered Numantia and Carthage' instead of saying in one word *Scipio*.[1] This is poetical, or to say the least of it, rhetorical to a pitch bordering on poetry. It is so often used by Mr. Freeman as to be a characteristic of his writings. In the following example Sicily is not named; but by two lines of description that island is placed before the mind of those who know enough to be able to understand it.

As William turned to his own ends the skill of the continental and the insular Teuton, so his countrymen were soon to turn the skill of Greek and Saracen to their ends, in that other island of hardly less renown which the Norman won as his home and kingdom in the southern sea.—Freeman, *N.C.* Vol. iv. p. 86.

In another place Glastonbury Tor is not named but is graphically designated as follows:—

Another, Kenwardston, the dowry of the widowed Countess, crowns the wooded height which looks full on that inland mount of the Archangel which shelters the earliest home of Christianity in Britain.—*Id.* Vol. iv. p. 130.

Perhaps the best way to characterize the peculiar diction of Carlyle would be to say that he had outdone all others in the appropriation of poetical elements. There are not many prose authors who would venture upon that attitude of the poetic muse which is technically known as Apostrophe. In Carlyle however we may find some daring and successful examples, as this—'Play it, O Royalty!'

Royalty has always that sure trump-card in its hand: Flight out of Paris. Which sure trump-card, Royalty, as we see, keeps

[1] *Inst. Orator.* viii. 6. § 43.

ever and anon clutching at, grasping; and swashes it forth tentatively; yet never tables it, still puts it back again. Play it, O Royalty! If there be a chance left, this seems it, and verily the last chance; and now every hour is rendering this a doubtfuller. Alas, one would so fain both fly and not fly; play one's card and have it to play.—T. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, II. iii. 6.

To be able to work in poetic features, and yet at the same time to be justified as a writer of prose, is not given to everybody. The next quotation exhibits an Apostrophe in prose addressed to a choral leader, and the example may safely be imitated by those authors who can produce a book like that from which it is drawn.

This festival was laboriously organized. 'Now I know,' wrote a committee-man after the event was over, 'now I know why no one who has taken part in one tercentenary ever lives to take part in another.' . . . It is the tendency of a set celebration to disappoint feeling. . . . When all was over, Uppingham had not spoken its 'word.' Perhaps it was a word which could not be uttered from the speaker's platform. The school music, whose part in our festivals was worthy of its history, hit the mark more clearly. Music was *our* art, the art in which by consent of generous rivals we were first. And it was our boys' voices, Paul David, as your wand led them down the flowing stream of your Tercentenary Cantata, and the stilled hall hung on the notes, moved beyond all wont, that breathed the right passion of the hour, and hymned the praise of Uppingham.– J. H. Skrine, *Edward Thring*, p. 223.

Then Carlyle has his pictures from Mythology. Anybody may introduce the figures of Scylla and Charybdis for illustration of the relative dangers of alternatives in action; anybody may, in describing political commotion, glance at Eolus and his imprisoned winds, or at the venerable controller of the storm; but not many would dare to carry out the picture as it is done in the subjoined instances.

Sansculotte Scylla hardly weathered, here is Aristocrat Charybdis gurgling under his lee!

Hitherto, in all tempests, Lafayette, like some divine Sea-ruler, raises his serene head: the upper Eolus blasts fly back to their caves, like foolish unbidden winds: the under sea-billows they had vexed into froth allay themselves. But if, as we often write, the *sub*marine Titanic Fire-powers came into play, the Ocean bed from

beneath being burst? If they hurled Poseidon Lafayette and his Constitution out of space; and, in the Titanic mêlée, sea were mixed with sky?—*French Revolution*, II. iii. 5.

He does not shrink from a poetic placement, almost a cadence of words.

What can murmurs and clamours, from Left or from Right, do to this man; like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved?—*French Revolution*, II. iii. 5.

If there is such a thing as a Prose Poem, the grandest example thereof is in our language: it is Carlyle's *French Revolution*. In conception it is Epic; in vocabulary Cyclopic, in execution Titanic. It stands alone. It is strange, marvellous, solitary. It has nothing about it that is exemplary or propagative; it may be admired, but it cannot be imitated. It has no advice for the student but to wonder and stand aloof. It is and must remain unique; prolific it is not, belonging to no species; it is a *lusus naturæ*, a strange and happy sport, a chanceling in Nature.

This great phenomenon teaches us however this lesson, namely, that such things are possible, and therefore that it is not wise to lay down rules universal and inflexible, or to define a limit as to what and how much of the elements of poetry may be imported into Prose. But there is a further observation and one of greater consequence. Teeming as Carlyle's diction is with poetic elements, the diction is not poetic;—the whole work may indeed be thought of as an Epic poem, but the diction hardly ever takes a poetic flight. We may call it wild or furious, enthusiastic, spasmodic, or dithyrambic prose; but we cannot call it poetic, we cannot deny it the name of Prose.

But still, after all, the general rule of prose composition is, as I have said, that we may not freely admit poetic, or archaic, or biblical diction. Interdicted under this head is that use of the preposition 'of' so familiar in the Bible, when it is the instrument of passivity, as in the phrase 'for to be seen of men.' It produces a certain quaint effect, which Carlyle introduces when it pleases him, as in the phrase 'of all the narrow,' in the following passage.

Incorruptible Robespierre retires for a little to native Arras; seven short weeks of quiet; the last appointed him in this world. Public Accuser in the Paris Department, acknowledged high priest of the Jacobins; the glass of incorruptible thin Patriotism, for his narrow emphasis is loved of all the narrow,—this man seems to be rising, somewhither?—*French Revolution*, II. v. 1.

An indirect illustration of the restrictions here asserted may be gathered from the liberty of the humouristic writer. In the writings of Charles Lamb we meet with such archaic expressions as 'those charming little missives ycleped Valentines' or 'the weary and all forspent two-penny postman'—such instances are not really exceptions, or if they are, they are exceptions of the sort which is said to prove the rule. For these expressions are manifestly humourous, manifestly chosen for their drollery—a service for which they would be unavailable, if it were open to every prose-writer to make use of them at will.

The humourist enjoys great privileges; he has all the resources of the vocabulary at his choice, he is not precluded from poetic words and phrases, so he handle them daintily, and do it, as it were, undesignedly,—while others are prohibited, he may frisk and wanton in the wide echoing halls of old Romance:—

With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide! They spoke of the past:—the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves—with their old fantastic flourishes and decorative rubric interlacings—their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of ciphers . . .—*Essays of Elia*, 'The South-Sea House.'

The moment a writer does not profess to be quite serious, his writing passes into a new category. The moment we see that he is laying himself out to amuse us, we willingly join him in ignoring the canons of criticism. Such canons exclude rhyme and jingle from prose, but this only adds hilarity to a little out-break like the following.

His Hamlet naturally was as immature, and as amateur, as it was premature.—*Harper's Magazine*, 1889, p. 868.

To obviate any appearance of inconsistency in the above, I would illustrate the argument from a case somewhat analogous. It is universally admitted that our English Bible has exercised a great and a salutary influence upon our literary diction. But the very diction of the Bible has never been adopted by the best authors, and if any one has crudely imported it (excepting always John Bunyan) that author is thereby stamped as being of a secondary grade. The influence of biblical diction has been exerted through the transforming processes of the mind, and while we all recognize the certainty of the influence, we could hardly demonstrate it by the exhibition of quotations. When Dr. Arnold published the First Volume of his *History of Rome*, exception was taken to the legends of the early kings as related by him, because they seemed too distinctly to recall the language of the Bible. Since that time there has been so much revival of antique English that it is no longer easy for a reader to understand that outcry;—and indeed when I now read those pages myself I can hardly account for that feeling of their biblical tone which I did certainly experience at the time, and which I distinctly remember. In this I see evidence that the assimilative power of our current English diction has greatly increased within the last forty years, which amounts to saying that it has gained so much in breadth and variability.

And if it is forbidden to confound the diction of prose with that of poetry, there is also on the other side a line of demarcation, almost equally decisive, between literary Prose and the freedom of conversation. The following letter by Macaulay will serve to set this before us. Leigh Hunt had been a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, and the editor, Macvey Napier, had taken fright at Hunt's easy and idiomatic English. Napier wrote a letter to Hunt criticizing his free and easy diction in such a manner as to hurt his feelings, and Hunt went for counsel to Macaulay, who wrote him the following admirable letter.

Albany, October 29, 1841.

My dear Sir,—I do not wonder that you are hurt by Napier's letter, but I think that you a little misunderstand him. I am confident that he has not taken any part of your conduct ill, and equally confident that by the expression *gentlemanlike*, which certainly he might have spared, he meant not the smallest reflection either on your character or manners. I am certain that he means merely a literary criticism. His taste in composition is what would commonly be called classical,—not so catholic as mine, nor so tolerant of those mannerisms which are produced by the various tempers and trainings of men, and which, within certain limits, are, in my judgment, agreeable. Napier would thoroughly appreciate the merit of a writer like Bolingbroke or Robertson; but would, I think, be unpleasantly affected by the peculiarities of such a writer as Burton, Sterne, or Charles Lamb. He thinks your style too colloquial; and no doubt, it has a very colloquial character. I wish it to retain that character, which to me is exceedingly pleasant. But I think that the danger against which you have to guard is excess in that direction. Napier is the very man to be startled by the smallest excess in that direction. Therefore I am not surprised that, when you proposed to send him a *chatty* article, he took fright, and recommended dignity and severity of style; and care to avoid what he calls vulgar expressions, such as *bit*. The question is purely one of taste. It has nothing to do with the morals or the honour.

As to the tone of Napier's criticism, you must remember that his position with regard to the *Review*, and the habits of his life, are such that he cannot be expected to pick his words very nicely. He has superintended more than one great literary undertaking,—the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, for example. He has had to collect contributions from hundreds of men of letters, and has been answerable to the publishers and to the public for the whole. Of course he has been under the necessity of very frequently correcting, disapproving, and positively rejecting articles; and is now as little disturbed about such things as Sir Benjamin Brodie about performing a surgical operation. To my own personal knowledge, he has positively refused to accept papers even from so great a man as Lord Brougham. He only a few months ago, received an article on foreign politics from an eminent diplomatist. The style was not to his taste; and he altered it to an extent which greatly irritated the author. Mr. Carlyle formerly wrote for the *Review*,—a man of talents, though, in my opinion, absurdly overpraised by some of his admirers. I believe, though I do not know, that he ceased to write

because the oddities of his diction and his new words compounded *à la Teutonique* drew such strong remonstrances from Napier. I could mention other instances, but these are sufficient to show you what I mean. He is really a good, friendly, and honourable man. He wishes for your assistance, but he thinks your style too colloquial. He conceives that, as the editor of the *Review*, he ought to tell you what he thinks. And, having during many years been in the habit of speaking his whole mind on such matters almost weekly to all sorts of people, he expresses himself with more plainness than delicacy. I shall probably have occasion to write to him in a day or two. I will tell him that one or two of his phrases have hurt your feelings, and that, I think, he would have avoided them if he had taken time to consider.

If you ask my advice, it is this. Tell him that some of his expressions have given you pain; but that you feel that you have no right to resent a mere difference of literary taste; that to attempt to unlearn a style already formed and to acquire one completely different would, as he must feel, be absurd, and that the result would be something intolerably stiff and unnatural; but that, as he thinks that a tone rather less colloquial would suit better with the general character of the *Review*, you will, without quitting the easy and familiar manner which is natural to you, avoid whatever even an unreasonably fastidious taste could regard as vulgarity. This is my honest advice. You may easily imagine how disagreeable it is to say anything about a difference between two persons for both of whom I entertain a sincere regard.—*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, Edited by his Eldest Son. Smith, Elder, and Co., 1862.

As an example of a phrase that presents itself readily, but is too familiar for admission, I cite that of a sentence ending with the preposition *to*, the symbol of an unexpressed Infinitive. Thus—'He said he did not wish to.' Here it is required by the dignity of literature that the structure should be completed: 'He said he did not wish to do so.' This must not be confused with the case of a preposition at the close of the sentence which has been called Anglicism, and which is discussed in another chapter.

Another colloquialism is that of using Adjectives as Substantives, other than those which are sanctioned by current usage. We should not feel at liberty now to write *stupids* as in the following sentence from the pen of Richard Steele.

Poor Estcourt! let the vain and proud be at rest, thou wilt no

more disturb their admiration of their dear selves, and thou art no longer to drudge in raising the mirth of Stupids, who know nothing of thy merit, for thy maintenance.—*The Spectator*, No. 468 (1712).

The excess of colloquialism degenerates into *slang*, to which Hallam expressed his repugnance in the following terms:—'a word which, as itself belongs to the vocabulary it denotes, I use with some unwillingness.' [1]

The Universities have a privilege of their own in all that regards slang. It is but a few years since *Greats* was first used for 'Great go'—one slang for another slang expression—and now it figures in a decorously written pamphlet.

There is a difference of opinion among examiners as to the importance to be attached to special subjects in *Greats*.—Percy Gardner, *Classical Archæology at Oxford*, 1889.

We saw above that touches of poetic diction are used to produce a humourous effect. The same thing is also to be observed with regard to slang, especially if we look back a little into the older writers, but this freedom has been so long discountenanced, that it is now rarely seen except in remote provincial newspapers.

There is a species of Diction which is characterized by a colloquial tinge bordering on slang; such was that of Sydney Smith in a former generation, and that of Lord Grimthorpe among contemporaries. The latter, however, does not always keep quite so clear of the edge of the precipice as the former did. The line which separates the colloquial from the slangy is very delicate and at times defaced and rendered dangerous by foot of passengers.

Somewhere about 1885 *The Guardian* contains the following from the pen of Sir Edmund Beckett Denison, as Lord Grimthorpe was then called.

When Mr. Goodhart writes about Dr. Hort's amazing preface to the Revised Greek Testament of himself and Dr. Westcott never having been answered, he ignores something else besides Dean Burgon and Dr. Scrivener's memorable works thereon. Who does he pretend has ever replied to Canon Cook's demolition of Dr. Hort's 'Syrian Recension,' on which his fabric is based, with

[1] *Literature of Europe*, IV. vii. § 32.

his two favourite MSS., the Sinaitic and the Vatican, which Mr. Cook has shown to be about as independent as two scriveners' copies of a deed? . . . Allow me to ask another little question. Where is the Bishop of Durham's reply to the second edition of Canon Cook's other pamphlet on 'Deliver us from Evil'? It is now going on for four years since he promised it in your columns. No doubt he has plenty to do; but if anybody could do that job he could, in less than three and a half years or 1,260 days. Though I pretend to no learning of that kind, I flatter myself I can judge of reasoning when I see it. And it seems to me that the surrender of Drs. Westcott and Hort and their allies to the critic just mentioned is quite unique in controversy.

Many years earlier the same author made a declaration of his preference for the colloquial.

I have however retained the style and title of lectures; partly because I did not like to efface what may be called the personal identity of the book, though its name is changed to suit its more general character; and partly because I prefer that convenient directness of address to the dull circumlocutions and elaborate affectations of modesty, with which it is the fashion now to exclude the two first personal pronouns from literary use. And for the same reason, I have written as nearly as possible in the same style as I should have spoken these lectures, saying everything in the way which seemed to me the most likely to be attended to and understood. For I do not agree with those who think that the dignity of literature requires writing to be as far removed as possible from talking, and seem to have compounded their own style out of modern Acts of Parliament and bad translations of Latin.—Edmund Beckett Denison, *Lectures on Church Building*, ed. 2 (1856), Preface.

And however jealous we may be of the colloquial tendency, it still remains a fact of prime importance, that, as between the elevations of poetry on the one hand, and the depressions of the colloquial on the other, the natural affinities of Prose are more with the latter than with the former. Prose is the literary evolution of conversation, as Poetry is the literary evolution of singing.

Thus it appears that prose literature demands a certain moderate elevation, below the pitch of poetry, but yet distinctly raised above the colloquial. There are degrees and shades of

elevation according to the conditions of the writer, the subject, and the occasion. But if we speak of the dignity of literature as something which is generally felt and recognized, and as having a certain level of its own, though not an absolutely uniform level, we might be glad to find some one characteristic feature by which, as by a sort of beacon, that level might be signalized. And I cannot think of any mark so significant in this respect as the Subjunctive Mood. Some people seem to think that the Subjunctive Mood is as good as lost, that it is doomed, and that its retention is hopeless. If its function were generally appreciated, it might even now be saved. If it has been gradually waning, this waning seems pathologically correlative to the prevalent affectation of writing with a certain ease and abnegation of pomp—in short, with an ambition of condescending popularity. This is a dangerous symptom, and it goes with other indications, not so easy to instance, which give cause to fear that our literary pitch is in danger of dropping below its just level.

In the following quotation we have an oft-repeated observation, which is redeemed from triviality by the manner of its statement, and especially by the use of a Subjunctive clause in its introduction.

> Though the confession be somewhat humiliating, it is yet true, that it is not possible to plant a study at Oxford except by means of an examination.—Percy Gardner, *Classical Archæology at Oxford*, 1889.

It may, perhaps, be thought that the Subjunctive imparts something of a cold and statuesque attitude, removing the discourse too far from the life-touch of conversation. But if we lose the Subjunctive Verb it will certainly be a grievous impoverishment to our literary language, were it only for its value in giving variation to Diction—and I make bold to assert that the writer who helps to keep it up deserves public gratitude.

I add some quotations in which the Subjunctive is employed.

> The object of the present publication will be attained, if any person find assistance from it in bringing his own thoughts and

feelings into more entire unison with those recommended and exemplified in the Prayer Book.—John Keble, *Christian Year*, Advertisement.

For my present purpose the question whether the triumph of democracy be a good or be an evil is absolutely irrelevant. To many Conservatives or Whigs the increased authority of the masses may appear a dubious blessing; to Liberals and Radicals it may seem, as it does to myself, best described, in the words of a well-known writer, as a 'providential fact.' The language in which we speak of a fact matters little or nothing. Our duty and our wisdom is to recognize its existence, and when, as in the present case, it is immutable, accept it loyally. The admission that the electors reign and govern will be made in words by every man of sense. The difficulty lies in realizing the consequences of this admission. These are various, and many of them of good omen for Unionism. The old divisions, for one thing, of Tory and Radical, Conservative and Whig, depending as they did on a politician's attitude towards the growth of popular power, are unmeaning. It were well that the death of old divisions should involve the disappearance of names which have lost their real significance.—A. V. Dicey, in *Liberal Unionist*, January 1889.

At the close of Johnson's Life of Gray there is a short paragraph which does something to redeem the character of a piece that is utterly unworthy of its author. The last sentence of all owes some of its weight and dignity to two Subjunctives:—'Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him.'

But, whatever becomes of details, the general requisite is that there must be something of elevation. There is a certain distinction of manner which cannot be defined, and yet is felt. It is a blending of modesty and dignity. It is the difference between presentable and unpresentable. Literary diction must not wear an appearance of slackness or negligence, it must not be in undress;—it must not ignore the presence of the public before whom it appears. Without incorrectness or the breaking of any rule, a sentence may betray a want of something, we can hardly say what, which makes it unsatisfactory, we can hardly say why. This is the defect which is vaguely characterized as 'bald.' We may perhaps see an example in the following short sentence, which, though it

conveys its meaning quite easily and clearly, yet has a lack of something which in literature is indispensable.

The homage was given with as little warmth, as it was received.

This quotation is taken from a history of Henry II., where the context is relating how the king, after the loss of his son by an accident at sea, brought over his daughter from France to receive the homage of England. And here let me observe that I entertain a particular sentiment of respect for the author, and, should the quotation be verified, I hope that my criticism will not appear to pass the bounds of necessary freedom, especially seeing that it is important to my task that even the deterrent examples should be taken from good literature.

The Saga literature of Iceland has a peculiar charm of artlessness, which in short narratives is delightful and fascinating. It is a manner that reminds us of Grimm's Fairy Tales. But it is not so appropriate for works of larger compass. As literature increases in volume, as large histories or expanded arguments have to be written, it is found that this artless manner, which seems to reflect a sort of primitive fire-side conversation, will not sustain a reader's attention. If any one were to adopt in English the style of a Saga, his writing would be condemned as 'bald.' Here I may avail myself of some sentences of criticism which I met with in the *Saturday Review*, and which appear to me quite just.

Notwithstanding the praise heaped upon them by Mr. Laing, these Sagas cannot be called a model of historical writing. Although occasionally picturesque and incisive, the style is, on the whole, bald in the extreme. Here is a specimen, taken absolutely at random, which sets out the history of a certain Halfdan: 'Halfdan was the name of king Eystein's son who succeeded him. He was called Halfdan the Mild, but the Bad Entertainer—that is to say, he was reported to be generous, and to give his men as much gold as other men gave of silver, but he starved them in their diet. He was a good warrior, who had been long in Viking cruises, and had collected great property. He was married to Hlif, a daughter of king Vestmara. Holtar, in Vestfold, was his chief house, and he died there on a bed of sickness, and was buried at Borro under a mound.' This kind of writing, although it has the merit of simplicity, when

followed over an expanse of fourteen hundred pages, ends by confusing the mind.[1]

It has been observed above that the usual pitch of elevation is playfully exalted by the humouristic writer for the particular aim of his composition. We now add the further observation, that there is, on the other hand, such a thing as a lowering of pitch which is designedly done (generally but for a moment), and mostly with a view to indicate levity or contempt or some feeling of a kindred nature. In the following example the use of the colloquial *don't* is like a passing instantaneous glance of disdain towards the recited argument.

In the present case the marks of genuineness in the 'we' section are too strong to be denied. It is therefore found unavoidable to own that this part of the book of the Acts is a real relic of the Apostolic age; but the Tübingen theory is that some compiler who lived in the second century happened to get possession of memoranda really made by a travelling companion of St. Paul, whose name we don't know, and that the compiler incorporated these in a narrative, in the main unauthentic, and intended to disguise the early history of the Christian Church.—G. Salmon, *Introd. N. Test.* p. 370.

§ 2. Of Lucidity.

The subject of Elevation which we have hitherto been considering is somewhat vague in its nature, applying as it does to the general air of prose diction. Let us now pass on to the consideration of a more definite quality. And here we can have no hesitation in saying that of all the qualities which are to be desired in the character of prose, the first and foremost is Lucidity. To be clear, open, manifest, transparent, is a virtue of discourse, not merely inasmuch as it removes obstructions from the path of the attentive mind, but further and beyond this, because it imparts positive pleasure;—it lifts the reader, it helps his mind, it bears him as on wings. It has been justly said of Macaulay that though no one ever had to read a sentence of his twice, to find out what he meant, yet many a time have his sentences been

[1] *The Saturday Review*, July 20, 1889; p. 76. Review of Anderson's edition (1889) of Laing's *Snorri Sturlason*.

re-redd for the sake of the positive pleasure which they afford by their Lucidity.

And as this position will be generally accepted without gainsaying, it gives us another and a very tangible illustration of the difference between Poetry and Prose. It cannot be said of Poetry that Lucidity is essential to it. What is essential to Poetry is that it should affect the imagination, and there are poets who do this by being obscure. The obscurities of Mr. Robert Browning have not hindered his success as a poet. Poetry like Pope's, as transparent as any crystal, is not universally admitted to produce the proper effect of Poetry. Poetry may be transparent, or it may be obscure, according to the genius of the poet; but prose *must* be lucid, or at least it must not affect obscurity, and herein is a great note of the distinct place and function of Prose as an instrument of communication between mind and mind.

The first condition of Lucidity is grammatical soundness. The practical value of the study of Grammar may be put beyond all reach of disputation by the mere force of experience. The familiar knowledge of the Parts of Speech and of their proper relations to one another, whether as acting in concord, or as governing and governed, or again as antecedent and relative—a perfect familiarity with these delicate relations and a well-formed habit of respecting them in the formation of every sentence—this is the first and most indispensable condition of Lucidity.

Diction should be grammatical: it should be constructed with a just respect for the Parts of Speech; and this, not from any fanciful or pedantic motive, but for the most practical of all reasons, because what is thus written will be the easier to read. The point here aimed at will best be understood by exemplification. For this purpose I will quote the first words of a Preface, a form of writing which is generally among the most carefully prepared; and the Preface which I am going to quote is by an Oxford graduate, introducing a course of Lectures which were delivered before an audience accounted one of the most critical in the metropolis. It begins thus:

The publication of these Lectures, which was suggested to me

at the time of their delivery, has been delayed for various reasons, some of which circumstances have since overruled. The objection to doing so, which is founded upon their defects, &c. &c.

The formula 'doing so' refers to 'publishing,' which is contained in the antecedent substantive 'publication.' There is no absolute obscurity, but there is an inequality of the surface, answering no purpose, and only producing in the traveller over it the unpleasant feeling of jolty ground.

Let us cast a glance over some of the Parts of Speech and observe how they stand affected towards Lucidity. We will begin with the Substantive. It is particularly to be noticed that in the Genitival relation, which is a main function of this part of Speech, we have two alternatives, the Saxon Genitive, and the French Genitive.[1] To use and distribute these judiciously belongs to Euphony, and belongs to Variety, but it belongs also to Lucidity. The French Genitive, imported in the medieval period, went on increasing through the whole era of the Latin domination, insomuch that we marvel to see applications of the Saxon Genitive so late as Clarendon which we should hardly venture upon even now, although in our day the tide has turned, and in the movement of restitution many places have been recovered by the native idiom in this respect. As an example of Saxon Genitives in Clarendon, I will quote vii. 158:—'This messenger returned when the king's and army's motion was under debate.'

We will group our details around some of the Parts of Speech, and we will, as far as possible, observe the same order as in the chapter on Grammar, beginning with the Presentives. After the Substantives come the Adjectives. In many writings which are freely sprinkled over with Adjectives, this Part of Speech is observed to be an element of weakness. Indeed it is very easy to be lavish of adjectives, and to achieve thereby a superficial appearance of copiousness and confidence;—but to allot adjectives rightly requires a good knowledge of the subject united with sound taste and literary judgment. Used under these conditions, they are among the smartest and most effective of the elements of language, and

[1] For any definitions of terminology, I refer to my *English Philology*.

together with a richness of meaning they convey a warmth of feeling and a colour to the imagination which exceeds the power of either verb, substantive, or adverb. When Lord Bramwell summed up the teaching of Mr. Henry George in three words—'Mischievous dishonest nonsense'—he displayed undesignedly the fine powers of the Adjective.

Burke had a great and effective command of adjectives:

A peaceful, honourable, and affluent decline of life, must be purchased by a laborious or hazardous youth; and every day I think, more and more, that it is well worth the purchase.—Edmund Burke to Richard Shackleton, 1764.

I heard from Will. Burke that he had seen Lord Chatham pass by, on his return from St. James's, and that he had certainly been in the closet. He did not continue there above twenty minutes. It is not yet known whether he was sent for, or went of his own mere motion. If he was sent for, the shortness of the conference seems to indicate that nothing at all has been settled. If he was not sent for, it was only humbly to lay a reprimand at the feet of his most gracious master, and to talk some significant, pompous, creeping, explanatory, ambiguous matter, in the true Chathamic style, and that's all.—*To the Marquis of Rockingham*, 1769.

The best patriots in the greatest commonwealths have always commended and promoted such connections. *Idem sentire de republicâ* was with them a principal ground of friendship and attachment, nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleasing, more honourable, and more virtuous habitudes.—Edmund Burke, *Present Discontents*, Works, ii. 332.

A liberal hand in this element is Mr. Swinburne, whose critical essays are adorned with such a profusion of Adjectives as cannot perhaps be anywhere matched in the whole range of English prose.

The exquisite humour, the womanly tenderness, which inform and imbue each other with perfect life and faultless grace beyond reach of any art but that which itself is nature; the matchless refinement of his criticism, the incomparable spontaneity of his style; all these it is easy, if it is not impertinent, to praise. . . . But if there be one part of his work more delightful than another—more delightful (if that be possible) than the very *Essays of Elia*—it is to be found by readers who are fit to relish it in those fugitive notes and marginal observations which have all the bright fine

freedom of his most fanciful letters, and all the clear swift insight of his subtlest criticisms.—*The Nineteenth Century*, January 1885, p. 67.

The best of performers may overdo a favourite part. And when overdone, this function is no longer an illuminating source—it degenerates into an exhibition of epithets, which tends to distract the mind from the subject of discourse. An example of this may be quoted from the same author's essay on Ben Jonson in the *Nineteenth Century* for April 1888. He there closes an elaborate paragraph on *Cynthia's Revels*, with the following sentence, which is quoted rather as a sample than as a model.

The wildest, the roughest, the crudest offspring of literary impulse working blindly on the passionate elements of excitable ignorance was never more formless, more incoherent, more defective in the structure, than this voluminous abortion of deliberate intelligence and conscientious culture.

To write without adjectives may be a counsel of safety, but it never can lead to high excellence. The utmost that can be attained without adjectives is correctness of outline; there is no warmth, no colour, no emotion. But these are the things that constitute the highest exhibition of Lucidity:—they are, in fact, the full opening and expansion of Light. When adjectives are happily applied, even one or two will shed a marvellous light over a sentence and give a thrill of pleasure to a sympathetic reader.

The Christian Church is so constituted as to be able to spread itself out in its separate branches into all regions of the earth; so that in every nation there may be found a representative and an offshoot of the sacred and gifted Society, set up once for all by our Lord after His resurrection.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, ii. 8.

Adjectives do well sometimes when they are massed in one apophthegmatic sentence in the midst of a general paucity of the same Part of Speech. Such an arrangement will sometimes have the happy and useful effect of putting the whole case in a broad light.

The lives of these ambassadors of commerce are hard and trying. They must travel in all weathers and at all times of the year. They

must be active, energetic, persevering, and persuasive. They meet all kinds of customers, and must adapt themselves to the personal peculiarities of all conditions of men. Their calling is more fitted for youth than for middle age, and few can remain travellers after they become old. Therefore, one would suppose, the first thought of such men would be to subscribe liberally to the institutions established to provide them with homes or annuities. Yet only a comparatively small percentage of the thirty thousand travellers seem to think of old age.—*The Daily Telegraph*, Oct. 19, 1889.

Æsthetic criticism revels in Adjectives. Writings, appreciative or depreciative, upon Music, Printing, Architecture, Sculpture, are apt to be prodigal in Adjectives and Adverbs. The occasion of Mr. Furniss's 'Artistic Joke' (as *The Times* called it) elicits such sentences as the following:

There can be no possible difference of opinion among the patrons of this remarkable exhibition as to its merits, its originality, or its chances of success. The only question for visitors to decide is whether Mr. Furniss's 'Artistic Joke' is more artistically jocular or jocularly artistic, inasmuch as it is difficult to say whether the humour or the cleverness of the exhibition predominate. The treatment of these pictorial parodies varies considerably, from the carefully elaborate artistic mockery to the grotesquely exaggerated *plaisanterie*, while many of the works contain sufficient grim humour to claim attention apart from their artistic cleverness, &c., &c.—*Observer*, April 24, 1887.

It is not too much to say that nothing more brilliantly humorous than the black and white drawings hung in Mr. Harry Furniss's Royal Academy at the Gainsborough Gallery can well be imagined. Beside these excellent pictorial parodies the most scathing verbal criticism becomes flat and almost insignificant. Mr. Furniss does not merely burlesque a picture, but he parodies the very style and brushwork of his victims, and in so doing, he shows a positive genius for versatile mimicry.—*Truth*, April 28, 1887.

A sort of humourous demonstration (not without a flash of light) is sometimes obtained by the use of the old flexional Degrees of Comparison with polysyllabic adjectives, where sober Diction is wont to employ the younger symbols of *more* and *most*.

For example, Charles Lamb writes *goldenest*:

Methinks, it is better I should have pined away seven of my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes,

of Alice W——n, than that so passionate a love-adventure should have been lost.—*New Year's Eve.*

Carlyle writes *beggarliest, royallest, imperturbablest, despicablest, indubitablest, remarkablest,* &c.

Welcome the beggarliest truth so it be one, in exchange for the royallest sham!—T. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, I. vi. 1.

The Right Side, we find, persists, with imperturbablest tenacity. *Id.* II. i. 2.

Peculation of the despicablest sort does exist, and has long existed; but, unless the new-declared Rights of Man, and all rights whatsoever, *be* a cobweb, it shall no longer exist.'—*Id.* II. ii. 2.

Night unexampled in the Clermontais; shortest of the year, remarkablest of the century: Night deserving to be named of Spurs! —*Id.* II. iv. 7.

At the end of a well-sustained narrative of the Composite cast, a posse of Adverbs may be brought in with both a gratifying and a convincing effect. The following extract is but the preamble to a paragraph which would be too long to quote, a paragraph which has two great clusters of flexional adverbs, one to constitute its closing cadence, and one at its first culmination, which is here quoted:

A few years passed away, and the reaction came. The old generation, the warriors who had conquered in the fight, the statesmen who had directed the campaigns, and the people who had been sharers and spectators in the exciting struggle, began to die away; politicians and orators of an alien mode of thinking, who had scarcely been listened to (and, we are bound to say, had not always deserved to be listened to) in the heat of strife, came to the front and insisted on a hearing. Blood cooled down; reflection took the place of passion; bills came in for payment and were enormously, unexpectedly, sometimes almost overpoweringly heavy.—W. R. Greg, *Nineteenth Century*, Sept. 1878, p. 395.

Of all the Parts of Speech there is none so easy to lavish as the Adverb, and this gives it a cheap look, which impairs its efficiency and impressiveness. But just in proportion as this is the ordinary case with the Adverb, so it comes to pass that when an Adverb is happily and shrewdly planted, the telling effect of it is enhanced by a savour of strangeness and surprize.

Boys will be boys, but there is no reason why they should be atrocious little savages. There is little doubt that Brider and Russell, two lads who lately conspired to burn the training ship 'Arethusa,' are as quaintly depraved as any grown up men.—*The Daily News*, July 18, 1879.

Placement of Adverb with Phrasal Infinitive.

As regards the collocation of the Adverb with the Phrasal Infinitive, a most astonishing change has come up in our time, namely, that of placing it between the *to* and the verb. At first it was only in the more negligent sort of writing, and the phenomenon was disregarded as a thing of no account. But in process of time the eye was oftener greeted or molested by such phrases as:

'To permanently rise in the social scale;'
'To materially assist;'
'An art which he has to slowly learn;'

until it became apparent about twenty years ago that any one who was interested in the course of the English Language could no longer afford to ignore this innovation. Since then the instances have been thickening, and here follow a few examples at intervals of time:

to fully establish.

We believe the popular notion of the deep-sea bottom is that it resembles in its chief features the appearance of the land, having its mountains and valleys, its terraces, ravines, and plateaux. Geologists have conjectured that the popular notion is a delusion, and that there is a striking difference between the character of the ocean basins and the land surface, but it has been left for the 'Challenger' expedition to fully establish the truth of this conjecture. The fact is, the large ocean basins consist, for the most part, of extensive plateaux, upon which are being deposited the matter which will form the geological strata of a future continent.—*The Spectator*, June 15, 1878.

to any longer play.

It will be interesting to see whether, when his own private squabbles are all fought out, he will have sufficient energy left to any longer play the part of censor for the public good.—*The Standard*, Dec. 21, 1878.

to quietly withdraw.

On these occasions it was William Henry's habit to quietly withdraw and seek Margaret in the withdrawing room.—James Payn, *The Talk of the Town* (1885), c. vii.

to formally censure—to largely supplement.

In a Leader of *The Times*, May 3, 1884:

There has been reluctance to formally censure the Ministry.

And in one of June 6, 1888, we come upon this:

It may be confidently expected that other private donors will be stimulated by the example of the Whitworth legatees to join in the noble work. Lastly, there is the hope that the Council of the Corporation will to-day undertake to largely supplement private beneficence.

The next example is from a speech, but it is only the more available as evidence of the spontaneous manner in which this new collocation is working its way up. It occurs in the midst of a speech by Mr. Ritchie at Leicester on April 1, 1889, and the occasion was the inauguration of county government. The example has the advantage of presenting a *phrasal* adverb in this novel situation.

to in any way interfere.

I have far too high an appreciation of the work they [the boroughs] have done to in any way interfere with their independence, but I was anxious to associate with the country element as much of the element of town life as I possibly could, knowing as I did the enormous vitality in our towns, the great experience they have of municipal life, and the great success which has attended the government of the towns.

And as this new collocation has placed the Adverb between the Infinitive and its prepositional sign, so also it may sometimes be found standing between the Gerund (which is only an oblique Infinitive) and its prepositional sign. Thus, Mr. Matthew Arnold, in his Essay on 'The Functions of Criticism at the Present Time,' wrote:

by in its turn making.

Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is

known and thought in the world, and, by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas.—*The National Review*, Oct. 1864, p. 240.

The same author in the Preface to his 'Six Chief Lives,' has the sequence:

by for ever adding.

In England the common notion seems to be that education is advanced in two ways principally: by for ever adding fresh matters of instruction, and by preventing uniformity.

This innovation had already attracted the attention of Dean Alford, who in his *Queen's English*, 1864, relates that a correspondent avowed as his own usage and defended the insertion of an adverb between the sign of the infinitive mood and the verb. The example given was this, 'to scientifically illustrate.' The Dean's ruling was, that this is a practice entirely unknown to English speakers and writers; and that the *to* of the infinitive has always been regarded as inseparable from its verb. He reasoned that as we have already two modes of arrangement at our command, namely, 'scientifically to illustrate,' and 'to illustrate scientifically,' there seems to be no adequate motive for flying in the face of established usage.

In this current year of 1890 Mr. Andrew Lang has very fully expressed his estimate of this collocation, by treating it with ridicule and caricature. These are his words:

He who aims at failure . . . can hardly be too reckless of grammar, and should always place adverbs and other words between 'to' and the infinitive, thus: 'Hubert was determined to energetically and on all possible occasions, oppose any attempt to entangle him with such.'—*How to Fail in Literature*, p. 25.

And yet there is something to be said for this innovation, at any rate in certain exigencies of situation. The *to* being not only the sign of the verb, but at the same time also in the nature of a conjunction between the verb and the previous clause, it is plain that in proportion as this latter office comes to be practically felt, there will grow up a disinclination to place an adverb before the *to*. On the other hand, where the verb is transitive, it seems inconvenient to put the adverb

between the verb and its government, which sometimes consists of many words, and would drive the adverb off to a remote placement. All this may be urged in defence of the novelty, where a transitive verb is concerned; but where the verb is passive, and draws no government after it, the change seems gratuitous and glaring. Thus:

The Judge refused delay, and ordered a writ of attachment to immediately be issued.—*The Standard*, Nov. 28, 1888.

The next example is one of a class which affords evidence that this innovation has been induced by the lengthening of the evolute processes;—for I presume no one would say 'I want you to carefully examine this' instead of 'to examine this carefully.' When, therefore, Mr. Ebblewhite writes, 'I have to advise Mr. Donnelly to carefully examine the documents to which I refer,'—we see that the verbal object with its evolute clause (viz. 'the documents to which I refer') claiming proximity to its governing verb (viz. 'examine') has been the cause of the novel placement of the Adverb.

The mention of Mr. Donnelly's famous work reminds us of a more surprising example than any which has yet been quoted; for it appears that the 'cipher-narrative,' which, by the hypothesis of Bacon's authorship of the Plays, is in the diction of Bacon himself, contains an example of this adverbial collocation. This is, to say no more, very astonishing.[1] The following is an extract from the cipher-narrative:—'their aim [that of the plays] being it is supposed to thus poison the mind of the still discordant wavering multitude.'

[1] That it is impossible, is more than I will at present undertake to say. In the Statute 14 & 15 Hen. VIII. c. 5. § 3, as printed by the Commissioners on Public Records, in an edition professing to be an exact literal transcript from the original Rolls of Parliament, we find: 'And where that in Diocesys of England oute of London it is not light to fynde alwey men hable to sufficiauntly examyn after the Statute &c.' *Statutes of the Realm*, fo. Lond. 1817, Vol. III. p. 214. It is however to be noticed that in Berthelet's edition of the Statutes of the Reign of Henry VIII. (London, 1543), where the orthography varies throughout in many particulars from the Record Office edition, the passage appears as follows:—'And where that in dioceses of Englande out of London it is not lyght to fynde alwaye men able sufficiently to examyne after the Statute &c.' indicating that the collocation in question was at least unfamiliar. I am indebted for this information to Mr. C. L. Shadwell of Oriel College.

To conclude this section, there is one remark that should be made upon a phenomenon so novel and interesting. It is this:—we must recognize in this innovation an instinctive effort to satisfy the desire for greater Lucidity.

The Participle.

We come now to the Participle, which is a verbal Adjective, or adjectival Verb, adapting itself with great agility now to verbal and now to adjectival functions. This pliability of the Participle is freely made use of in English prose, and the matter is deserving of attention, because it is to the abuse of this pliant and ever subservient instrument, more than to any other assignable cause, that we may trace that loose and negligent manner of performance which is called Slipshod. The first illustration is borrowed from a highly confidential communication.

Having a large capital at my command should circumstances at any time occur causing you to require an immediate temporary advance of cash I beg respectfully to intimate &c.

Here we see a looseness of texture which is caused by the insertion of a long hypothetical clause between the participial clause and that with which it has a bespoken concord, namely, the true subject of the sentence. The 'Having' looks forward to 'I'; the 'I' looks backward to 'Having.' It concerns Lucidity to secure that the relation of the participle with its subject should be manifest and, if possible, uninterrupted, as it is in the following.

Despising the national sentiment of loyalty, he and his party dethroned and beheaded the King; despising the ecclesiastical sentiment, they destroyed the Church; despising the deep reverence for the constitution, they subverted the Parliament; despising the oldest and most cherished customs of the people, they sought to mould the whole social life of England in the die of an austere Puritanism.—Lecky, *History of England*, Vol. i. p. 119.

There ought to be no uncertainty even for a moment as to the subject of a Participle, or else it may be a pitfall to the reader. In the following example, 'having been called in' appears at first sight to refer to the writer, who has put himself

prominently before us in the opening word of the sentence. At length, the reader falls over the real subject 'Examination' as over a stumbling-block. Writers should smooth the way for their readers, and leave no traps in the path. I count it a gain to have a fair pretext for quoting so excellent a passage as the following.

My point in this discussion is;—that, having been called in to aid Education, Examination has grown and hardened into the master of Education. Education is becoming the slave of its creature and servant. I do not deny that Examination has its uses: I do not say that we can do without it. I say, that it is a good servant, but a bad master; and, like good servants turned bad masters, it is now bullying, spoiling, and humiliating education. —Frederic Harrison, *Nineteenth Century*, Nov. 1888.

Where a participial clause is employed in continuance of a categorical proposition, the participle is the natural property of the declared subject; and if, without notice given, it is transferred to the service of the object, it produces a halting uncertain effect. The following example is taken from the *Court Circular* of April 24, 1889.

At three o'clock the Queen received an address from the tenants on the Sandringham estate, having been introduced to her Majesty's presence by General Sir Dighton Probyn.

Inversely, where a participial clause precedes the categorical, the subject of the first should also be the subject of the second. This canon is dictated by logic and the claims of Lucidity, and therefore we need not be afraid to insist upon it, whatever authority may be quoted against it. I am not shaken in my assertion by the fact that it may be neglected once in a way even by the most lucid and most logical of English authors.

Having so lately quitted the tumults of a party and the intrigues of a court, they still kept his thoughts in agitation, as the sea fluctuates a while when the storm has ceased.—S. Johnson, *Life of Swift.*

But it is in the pendent phrase, a phrase like the Latin Ablative Absolute, that the Participle lends itself most readily to loose and slipshod composition. For example, when in a

sentence the apparent subject has been enlarged with the appendage of a long participial train, if it be then transformed into an Ablative Absolute by a sudden transition of the writer's mind to a new subject, the reader will find himself surprized and baffled by a turn of thought contrary to his expectation. In the next quotation a reader naturally takes 'The Duke' for the main subject of the sentence, and this impression is upheld by the long participial appendage, and he is in expectancy of a verb owning 'The Duke' for its nominative case; when suddenly a new subject 'the ministers' is sprung upon him, and a check is given to the current of his thought. It cannot be said that this is a trifle; it makes all the difference between the writing which is and that which is not Readable; it makes all the odds between Art and Bungling.

The Duke of Wellington having failed to form a government of declared anti-reformers, ready to devise a measure of reform at once satisfactory to the people and to the House of Lords, the ministers were recalled.—Erskine May, *Constitutional History of England*, Vol. i. p. 143.

Very different is the effect in the next example, in which, although, as in the last instance, it begins with a long participial clause, yet it does not, as in that case, inflict upon the reader a violent luxation of thought. The reason is manifest; it is because the participial clause is in concord with the main subject of the sentence.

Compelled, as he was occasionally, to be decisive even to abruptness, and to sacrifice the convenience of contributors to the paramount interest of the public, he never lost the respect or affection of those who could sympathize with him in his work, make due allowance for his difficulties, and think less of themselves than of the great issues at stake.—*The Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1885, p. 64.

Cases do occur, even in our best classics, where these grammatical relationships are violently out of joint. When this happens, we have a technical device for setting it all right. If the second part of a sentence does not answer to the structure of the former part, we exalt it into a figure of speech, and call it Anacoluthon, i.e. Inconsequent; and there is generally a Participle concerned.

My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given a hundred pounds for my predecessor's good-will.—Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, chap. iv.

The Participle has the function of (what may be called) furnishing the discourse with occasional portraiture. When a subject is to be set in high relief, arrayed in full with its characteristic attributes, then the Participles, Present and Past, are the grammatical functionaries. Gathering round the chosen subject as a focus and radiating from it in all directions, this Part of Speech produces the effect of a medallion, or a cameo, or a star, which gives a fine illumination to the narrative.

For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, &c.—Jeremy Taylor.

Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked its reputation stealing its way in a kind of subterraneous current through fear and silence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little disappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with steady consciousness and waiting without impatience the vicissitudes of opinion, and the impartiality of a future generation.—S. Johnson, *Milton*.

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the Dauphiness, at Versailles: and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in;—glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy.—Edmund Burke.

Any one who will consider the structure of the following sentences shall perceive this pictorial power of the Participle.

Suddenly in every part of this well-cemented Empire, in the East and West, North and South, as if by some general understanding, yet without any sufficient system of correspondence or centre of influence, ten thousand orderly societies, professing one and the same doctrine, and disciplined upon the same polity, sprang up as from the earth. It seemed as though the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and some new forms of creation were thrown forward from below, the manifold ridges of some 'great Mountain,' crossing, splitting, disarranging the existing system of things, level-

ling the hills, filling up the valleys,—irresistible as being sudden, unforeseen, and unprovided for,—till it filled the whole earth. . . . Throughout the kingdoms and provinces of Rome, while all things looked as usual, the sun rising and setting, the seasons continuing, men's passions swaying them as from the beginning, their thoughts set on their worldly business, on their gain or their pleasures, on their ambitious prospects and quarrels, warrior measuring his strength with warrior, politicians plotting, and kings banqueting, suddenly this portent came as a snare upon the whole earth.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, ii. 20.

But the Symbolics have a special faculty both for lucidity and for obscurity. If we find in some old author an unsatisfactory construction, it will very likely be in a pronoun, or in one of the symbolics, that the fault lies. In that striving after clearness which has been the task of the last three centuries, we may observe that improvement has oftenest been attained by some change in regard to these. Let us take the following sentence from one of the Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762):

The summer is already far advanced in this part of the world; and for some miles round Adrianople, the whole ground is laid out in gardens, and the banks of the rivers are set with rows of fruit-trees, under which all the most considerable Turks divert themselves every evening; not with walking, that is not one of their pleasures, but a set party of them choose out a green spot, where the shade is very thick, and there they spread a carpet, on which they sit drinking their coffee, and are generally attended by some slave with a fine voice, or that plays on some instrument.

The last clause would now be made more explicit by the addition of the symbolic *one*, thus:—'or one that plays on some instrument.'

The final determination of *which* as exclusively neuter, is a thing which is quite ungrounded in the history of the language, but it has had a useful effect in the way of perspicuity, and no doubt was occasioned by the striving after clearness. In the following passage I suppose we shall interpret the noble historian right if we understand *which* as *who*, but it is not absolutely necessary so to understand him. In short, there is ambiguity enough to serve for an illustration.

Many members of both houses were come to Oxford, which assured them the violent people there were even in despair.—Clarendon, *History*, vii. 180.

In those improvements which have taken place in collocation, the Symbolics are often concerned. In regard to the placement of the Adverb of negation, it does not appear to have been always felt as much as it is felt now, that we should place the Negative near the phrase which it is to qualify. The following, though from Dr. Johnson, is capable of amendment.

The *Congratulation* is indeed not inferior to the *Panegyrick*, either by decay of genius, or for want of diligence; but because Cromwell had done much, and Charles had done little.—*Life of Waller*.

We should now express it thus: 'The *Congratulation* is indeed inferior to the *Panegyric*, yet neither by decay of genius nor for want of diligence; but &c.'

In our earlier literature, down to the end of the seventeenth century, the placement of the adverb *only* is such as seems strange to us now. This is not the place to explain and render the cause of such phenomena, more especially as I should have to repeat what I have written elsewhere; but I will give an example not elsewhere quoted.[1] In Clarendon, *History*, vi. 403 we read:—'He was a man of no words, except in hunting and hawking, in which he only knew how to behave himself.' That is to say, the hunting field was the only place in which he knew how to behave himself; and modern usage would require the *he* and the *only* to change places.

One of the Symbolics which has an aptness for producing obscurity, is the Personal Pronoun. It is a difficulty which has always been felt in all literary languages, and which has never been completely overcome. Even the most admiring students of the Latin language will not acquit it of a liability to pronominal obscurity. When antecedents have been once fully expressed, the writer proceeds to deal with them through the symbolic medium of *he, him, it, they, them* &c. until sometimes he gets too far away from his base of operations, and

[1] *English Philology*, § 564.

the reader begins to fall into uncertainty about the antecedent —especially when *it* gets repeated so as to act the double part of nominative and objective Case to the verb. The following sentence exhibits something of this danger, towards its close.

In coming across this text then [Matthew vi. 34], though we at once see that it must not be taken wholly to forbid all looking forward to and providing for the future, yet, on the other hand, it is quite apparent that it does contain some great and important qualification with respect to this looking forward and providing; that it imposes some check upon it, and directs us to some habit of mind which is to counterbalance and adjust it, some habit of mind which is of a contrary kind to that of looking forward and planning, and which, though it may be consistent with it, still will and must greatly affect and modify it.—J. B. Mozley, *Sermons Parochial and Occasional*; IV. 'Thought for the Morrow.'

A great English classic in which obscurity often rises from uncertainty of the pronominal antecedents, is Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion.* In III. 214 occurs this phrase,—'which made him believe it depended very much on him'; and here Warburton has thought it necessary to indicate by a note who is meant by *him* and *him*; and I may say for my own part that I cannot accept more than half of his explanation. From the great prose classic of the seventeenth century let us turn to the experience of our time, and we shall see that it is still easy to be vague in the matter of personal pronouns, and in other relations of the discourse.

One can scarcely take up a Transatlantic newspaper nowadays without finding in it the report of exhortations addressed to the women of the country by lecturers of their own sex. Either American ladies like to lecture, or they like to be lectured; perhaps both statements are true. Anyway the lectures are there. For example, we find Mrs. Edmund Russell discoursing to ladies on 'How to spend money'—rather an unnecessary thing to do, one would have thought. At least one utterance of hers strikes us as rather enigmatical. 'Take all the ugly things out of your houses,' she is reported to have said, 'and they will be beautiful without further expense.' Does the 'they' refer to the houses or the ugly things? If to the houses, one would like some explanation of the assertion. Alas! in too many houses in this country, if the ugly

things were all taken away, there would be nothing left but the walls.—*The Globe*, April 3, 1890.

As the next example is taken from a letter, the antecedents to the various pronouns must be understood as lodged in the memory of the writer's correspondent. And although these cannot be furnished to readers of the present page, so that the whole of the case cannot be submitted to their judgment, yet I may say that this passage was confusing to those for whose information it was intended, and therefore it may be allowed to illustrate the present point, which is this, that pronouns require attention, and that a habit of respecting grammatical structure is necessary to Lucidity. It is the writing (I may add) of a perfectly educated gentleman.

I have consulted my mother on the subject, and she can throw no light on it. She had heard her father speak of them, and he had some record of them, but she never had anything to do with his papers after his death, and it disappeared of course.

But it is not enough to point out this aptness of the Personal Pronouns to cause obscurity; we must go further, and observe, that in what concerns Lucidity, there are other Pronouns which call for particular animadversion. Here we may remember what casualties have attended the employment of *who* and *which* as Relatives, by a usage taken from the French; a usage which has been in English for centuries now, but which has not as yet got to work without friction.

In one respect the change has been only and purely beneficial. There was a time when the same word *that* stood for Antecedent and Relative. By the acquisition of the new Relative *which*, we were delivered from the necessity of employing *that* in both these offices. We no longer write as Clarendon in *History*, v. 152:—'always to have opposed that that was of such an allay'—or as Johnson wrote in his Life of Dryden:—'That conversion will always be suspected that apparently concurs with interest.' Where, as in the second of these examples, there is a noun with the antecedent, the relative is *which* by present usage, and where there is no noun, the two *that's* are commuted for *what*. Thus:

'I cannot seriously discuss what is asserted with so little evidence.' G. Salmon, *Intr. N.T.* p. 463.

The use of *what* in this value is exceedingly incident to the diction of classical scholars, especially in a parenthetic phrase, which is congenial to the Ciceronian style. But this condensed Relative is not exempt from a certain liability to confusion with the Interrogative *what*, and I am able to say that such confusion did actually happen to a reader of the following quotation.

Nothing to do is the parent of vice of all sorts. That a boy should be bored at school, from the monotony or the absence of employment, is a blot on the school, because it is a great danger to the boy. It is the business of masters to provide both work and play, and, what is more difficult, a variety of rational and interesting voluntary occupations, which are intermediate between work and play, which occupy time, which fill the thoughts, and break up those deadly blank times in which evil germs breed.—J. M. Wilson, in *The Journal of Education*, November 1881.

In the immediate sequel this Relative is seen in its highest perfection, because the necessity for it is obvious and the Lucidity entire.

Again, it is necessary that what may be called the mechanical arrangements should be carefully attended to, in respect of dormitories and other places.

The construction 'that that' is the oldest construction of its kind in the English language; but with the growing desire for variation, and with the facilities offered by the institution of a second neuter Relative 'which,' there seems to be no longer any place for the use of 'that that.'

But it is in the conjunctional use of this frenchified Relative that we are made to feel the strange manners it has imported with it, and to perceive the relation that Parts of Speech may bear to the Lucidity of the sentence. I will quote a couple of sentences from a review of Sir W. Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, which appeared in *The Times* some ten years ago, and the reader is invited to notice the remarkable placement of the conjunctional Relative *of which* in the second of the two sentences.

The volumes supply, for the first time, materials by means of which British statesmen at home, and the British public at large, can criticize the actions of our Proconsuls in the East. Both Englishmen and native Indians will be thankful for a work, the accuracy, fulness of detail, completeness of information, and masterly arrangement of which constitute it a real and invaluable help to all who do honest work in India, and to all who honestly judge of Indian work at home.

The word *that* is a Demonstrative Pronoun, and it is a Relative Pronoun, and thirdly, it is a Conjunction. Any uncertainty about these functions, any confusing of them by the reader, is injurious to Lucidity, and the writer should avoid as far as possible the putting this snare in his reader's way. When first I redd the following paragraph I mistook the Conjunction *that* in the second sentence for a Demonstrative Pronoun, until I reached 'was' in the next clause.

How the poetry of that cadence dwells in my mind! Often I have thought that of more value to us than the positive knowledge imparted, was the emotional emphasis, with which he invested what he had not yet grasped as knowledge. The emotion was stored in the mind as a blank form, a vacant mould to be filled, later, with the matter of the thought. For an instance: speaking one day of the belief in a future life, he tried to get from us one of its scriptural warrants. Not succeeding, he recited, with a sudden great glow of feeling, the words from the Gospel: 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' For a boy's intelligence the point still needed some expansion or comment. He gave none or we did not understand it: the act of quotation was all that remained with me. But the outflash of his spirit did not die with the moment; it clung, like a golden cloud, to the embryo thought, one day to light it up. Unconsciously, he was following the true order of the higher teaching, making the passion for truth prepare the way for its possession.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*; ch. iii.

The slight touch of obscurity in the above passage is due to a rhetorical cause. The Grammar is correct, but the cast of the sentence may take a reader by surprize. Anyhow it offers us a convenient illustration of the liability of pronominal words to be the seat of obscurity.

And the chief security against this danger lies in the cultivation of the grammatical habit of mind. Let every pronoun or pronominal word have its definite antecedent, and that not merely in some vague idea but in a definite grammatical word. The following quotations will exhibit the touch of opacity that is incident to the neglect of this caution. Observe *that* in the first, and *which* in the second example.

The parsonage of Bishop's Borne in Kent, three miles from Canterbury, is in that archbishop's gift.—Izaak Walton, *The Life of Mr. Richard Hooker.*

No vice or wickedness which people fall into from indulgence of desires which are natural to all, ought to place them below the compassion of the virtuous part of the world: which indeed often makes me a little apt to suspect the sincerity of their virtue, who are too warmly provoked at other people's personal sins. —R. Steele, *Spectator*, No. 266.

Examples of this kind will help us to render justice to the service of Grammar as a promoter of Lucidity. It is not enough that pronouns have their antecedents in the writer's mind, or in the sense of the previous clause; they should always be referrible to grammatical words. There may be no doubt as to the meaning of a sentence, and yet it may be far from lucid. For by Lucidity we mean something more than the absence of darkness; we mean a bright and out-shining clearness which comes forward to meet the reader in a luminous and spontaneous manner. A grammatical habit of mind is the first rudiment of such a Lucidity as this.

At the head of the sentence, the Conjunction is less displayed now than formerly. We sometimes see whole paragraphs almost without a head-Conjunction; the cohesion being internal and arising out of the logical relation of the constituent sentences. This is a feature in which our Prose stands in contrast with French prose. French writers are much more explicit in Conjunctions than we are; and perhaps this is one of the traits which produce the wonderful luminousness of French diction. Perhaps it would be as well for English writers to cultivate our Conjunctions with a little more attention, keeping an eye not only upon the French page, but

also on that of Hooker and other Elizabethan authors. Thus did S. T. Coleridge descant in praise of Conjunctions:—

A close reasoner and a good writer in general may be known by his pertinent use of connectives. Read that page of Johnson; you cannot alter one conjunction without spoiling the sense. It is in a linkèd strain throughout. In your modern books, for the most part, the sentences in a page have the same connection with each other that marbles have in a bag; they touch without adhering.—*Table Talk*, May 15, 1833.

This want of cohesion often appears where the argument is sound, but the composition defective. Johnson seems never absent-minded from the interest of his reader; as Coleridge says, his prose is a linkèd strain, and no link omitted. In the following quotation the connective *however* implies some antecedent discussion of the point which does not appear on the page, and this is a defect in writing.

Cureton imagined that he could gain evidence for the Hebrew original of St. Matthew from the Syriac version which he published, and which he contended had not been made from Greek, but from the original Aramaic. However, on that point he has failed to convince scholars.—George Salmon, D.D., *Introduction to the New Testament* p. 223.

If it were worth while it would be possible to make a muster of similar examples, which might go some way towards justifying Coleridge's sweeping charge in the passage above quoted. But after all it is not by any means evident that the good writing of our time can be recognized by a glance at connectives. The prevailing habit is the ellipse of connectives. A paragraph strongly knit together by argumentative thought is often seen to have but one or two very mild conjunctions in it. This is no loss to the force or clearness of the argument, but it certainly may be a loss to its transparency. And herein lies a great advantage of French prose. The explicit connectives in good French make it easy to read rapidly, or, once redd, to reperuse the whole at a glance. Our English way may be seen in the following example.

There is one remark, obvious enough when it is made, but of which it is quite necessary for you to take notice, namely—that

'triple tradition' does not mean 'triply attested tradition' but singly attested tradition. If you compare the history of the early Church, as told by three modern historians, you will find several places where they relate a story in nearly identical words. In such a case an intelligent critic would recognize at once that we had, not a story attested by three independent authorities, but one resting on the credit of a single primary authority, coming through different channels. . . . Thus, instead of its being true that the 'triple tradition' is the most numerously attested portion of the Gospel narrative, we may conclude that this is just the part for which we have a single primary authority. Now, when the first Christian converts desired to hear the story of their Master's life there would be no difficulty in finding many who could tell them of the Passion and the Resurrection. Every one who had lived through that eventful week, in which the triumph of Palm Sunday was so rapidly exchanged for the despair of Good Friday; and that, again, for the abiding joy of Easter Sunday; would have all the events indelibly burned on his memory. In comparison of these events, those of the Galilean ministry would retire into the far back distance of things that had occurred years ago; and there would be more than the ordinary difficulty we all experience, when we unexpectedly lose one whom we love, of recalling words which we should have taken pains to treasure in our memory, could we have foreseen we should hear no such words again.—George Salmon, D.D., *Introduction to the New Testament* (1885) p. 181.

In this passage notice should be taken, not only of the paucity of conjunctions as connectives of sentences, but also of the frequent ellipse of the conjunction *that* in the internal dependencies of the sentence;—an ellipse which to the literary French is intolerable. And this omission is sometimes the cause, if not of downright obscurity, yet of a certain dimness and partial eclipse of Lucidity, as in this from the pen of Richard Steele, in the *Spectator*, somewhere in the year 1712.

It is certainly as great an instance of self-love to a weakness, to be impatient of being mimicked, as any can be imagined.

The last clause is bad because it is possible to put a wrong construction upon it; what the author meant to say was 'as any *instance that* can be imagined.'

The Interjection is now rather the property of poetry, but

still it is by no means excluded from prose. The following is from J. R. Lowell:

> Truth always has a bewitching savour of newness in it, and novelty at the first taste recalls that original sweetness to the tongue; but alas for him who would make the one a substitute for the other! —*My Study Windows*, ed. Garnett, p. 183 :—'Carlyle.'

As a conclusion to this section I repeat the assertion that a clear grammatical view is of the greatest use for the attainment of Lucidity. And the observation may be carried out in finer detail, beyond the simple recognition of each Part of Speech in its function. Chief among such details I would rank the importance of the Subjunctive Mood. There is a traditional scholastic superstition that to apprehend the subtlety of the Subjunctive we must resort to Latin. The fact is, that in its shades of relation the English Subjunctive is as fine as the Latin; and when we consider how little the English Subjunctive has of external and visible form, the action of Mind in the English Subjunctive will appear even more delicate than in Latin. Instances, where the light is intercepted for want of attention to this Mood, may be found in some of our best writers. In a book that I am reading at the moment, and to which I am indebted for much pleasure, as well as much profit too (unless the fault is in me)—'If Christians were then dependent on traditional rumour for the belief that Jesus was born at Bethlehem, . . . I cannot believe that John would have refrained from giving his attestation,' &c., threw me off the track of thought for a moment; and it certainly ought to have been written thus: 'If Christians *had been* then dependent &c.'

Perhaps out of a notion of avoiding pedantry—but from whatever cause, the English Subjunctive has been neglected, and, I venture to think, with injury to English diction. In a book entitled 'The Art of Authorship,' a book in which the experience of successful authors is given in their own words, Mr. Froude speaks thus:

> As a rule when I go over what I have written, I find myself striking out superfluous epithets, reducing superlatives into positives,

bringing subjunctive moods into indicative, and in most instances passing my pen through every passage which had seemed, while I was writing it, to be particularly fine. If you sincerely desire to write nothing but what you really know or think, and to say that as clearly and as briefly as you can, style will come as a matter of course. Ornament for ornament's sake is always to be avoided. There is a rhythm in prose as well as in verse, but you must trust your ear for that.

It does not appear from this how far Mr. Froude would go in the exclusion of the subjunctive;—perhaps he might withhold his approval from the relentless indicative of the example which follows next.

In a richly diversified correspondence upon the domestic grievance which appeared in *The Daily News* in the early part of April 1890, the following occurred in a manifesto by Mary Jane:

> It is time some contempt was shewn to ladies: they have shewn it to servants long enough.

Here it will be generally allowed that the neglect of the Subjunctive is disadvantageous both to elevation and lucidity.

There is one great source of Lucidity which has not been touched on in this section, because it is reserved for the section which follows. I mean the distinctness which is gained by synonymous repetition, by saying the same thing in different ways. As this has a use and a motive beyond Lucidity, one in which Lucidity is contained, it will be more properly placed in the next section, which is on Variation. It should not be matter of surprize if in an organism of so high an order as English Prose, there are many parts whose functions cannot rigidly be localized.

§ 3. Variation.

An important and essential factor in good diction is Variation, which should pervade every part—words, phrases, idioms, sentences. Variety in words has two aspects—sound and expression. As to the former, I may refer to what has been said above in Chapter I., on the occasion of a discourse written in words of one syllable. Such a practice is quite out of court, if only on the ground of its monotony. But there is

one instance under this head which deserves a passing notice. The merely monotonous repetition of a word should be avoided, as an offence at once to the ear and to the mind. Sometimes a mere accident supplies a useful illustration. Whether *attempted* . . . *attempted* in the following quotation is or is not due to oversight, it seems to me to be fairly quotable as an example here.

It has been attempted to extenuate the force of this concession by an attempted proof that the Pauline speeches in the Acts also contain many of Luke's favourite words.—G. Salmon, D.D., *Intr. N. T.* (1885) p. 396.

In the following quotation from a leading article the word *scene* is repeated in a manner that is obviously due to hasty authorship. The effect is comical; though it cannot be said that the word is amiss in either place. It is only unfortunate that it should be in the two places at the same time. A variation of expression was needed to make the composition passable.

The House of Commons on Saturday was the scene of another of those discreditable scenes which of late years have, unhappily, become only too frequent.—*The Standard*, Dec. 3, 1888.

And not only must we avoid pointless repetitions of the selfsame word, but we must also be on our guard against too exclusive use of any one sort or size of words. The Table in the First Chapter exhibits in typical miniature the constituents of the English vocabulary, and every writer who is wise will wish to avail himself of the resources which are at his command.

There has been a notion before now (and possibly some embers of it may be still aglow), that it is a sovereign specific of diction to use short words. People catch at such suggestions out of sheer impatience. Not knowing how much goes to the making of a good diction, they fancy it may be a sort of knack, and they would like to catch the trick of it. It is the same with all quackery. Ailing people fancy that perhaps some specific might in a minute put them all to rights, if only they could chance upon it; not considering that health is the result of a harmonious condition of a highly complex organization, and that the main secret lies in the conduct and

regulation of that life which is its animating centre. Somewhat like this occurs in popular notions about diction. There is no one key, but to be loyal to thought, and to subserve the thought with a diversity of form answerable to the copious variety of its nature. Sound diction cannot be produced by the observance of any rule about syllables or words, nor, indeed, by the help of any one rule that can possibly be framed. In another chapter may be seen a specimen of discourse confined to monosyllabic words.[1]

To come now to the consideration of Variety in words for the sake of fuller and better Expression. The following sentence touches the same thought by three different words—*cold-hearted, blunt, callous*:—all presenting, but in diverse aspects, the idea of moral insensibility.

There is very great danger of our becoming cold-hearted, as life goes on: afflictions which happen to us, cares, disappointments, all tend to blunt our affections and make our feelings callous.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, II. 6.

When the same thing is said in two ways, the idea is brought before the reader's mind with a roundness like that of binocular vision. In the following extract, there is something gained by the variation from 'backers' to 'supporters.'

If it be said that the backers of the General wish to see him President of the Republic, the obvious answer is, that the President of the Republic, under the existing Constitution, is far too insignificant and powerless a personage to be of much use to his friends. The supporters of General Boulanger do not intend him to be either insignificant or powerless; and, even if he were the least ambitious of men, they would not long permit him to maintain that character.

Synonymous expressions are good for distinctness, thus *take it right*, repeated in another form, viz. *perfectly comprehend it.*

Give them one simple idea, and see that they take it right, and perfectly comprehend it.—Locke.

In another example *identity* is repeated by *sameness; change in form* by *reform.*

A church does not lose its identity, or sameness, as an organized

[1] In Chapter viii. 'Of Euphony.'

Institution, by change in form or ceremony, or in laws of discipline, or by reforming itself from what it regards as abuses or corruptions. —*The Endowments and Establishment of the Church of England.* By Roundell, Earl of Selborne. 1886.

But the use of diversity in words is not limited to the purpose of clearness and distinctness. The variation which makes a full and copious diction is something quite different from synonymy. It imparts to the discourse a breadth and expansion which surrounds the thought as with an illuminating atmosphere. A train of varied illustration is brought to bear upon the subject as by a succession of lights; and herein lies one chief utility of the columns of words which are exhibited above. They are not to be understood as if they were mere alternatives, whereof some are to be chosen and others rejected; for it will often happen that in various parts of the same context, while one and the same subject is under consideration, all the varieties of words will find their due employment, one word being better here and the other there. And when this is experienced by the writer, he may on proper occasion import the whole vocabulary of the subject, and in so doing he will be justified by the natural bent and historical development of the English Language, which loves variation, and which, more than any other modern language, is averse to the monotonous repetition of the same word. So it appears that the lists furnish the writer with the means not of selection only, but of copiousness also, and of that variation in terms which is always a vital element of forcible expression, and nowhere more so than in the English Language.

In the following extracts from a Leader in *The Times*, March 20, 1889, we may usefully notice the sequences, not always of absolute synonyms, but of words which for the purpose in hand have at once a harmonious sense and a various sound:—*moribund, expire, die;—flout, insult, outrage, defy;—unhonoured, disgrace, ignominious;—blind, unmindful, indifferent.*

The London County Council yesterday practically made an end of the Metropolitan Board of Works. That moribund and discredited body might have been allowed to expire quietly on the 'appointed day,' or, as Lord Rosebery put it, to 'wrap its robe round it and

die with dignity,' if it had not resolved to flout its successor, to insult Parliament, to outrage public opinion, and to defy the Executive Government. . . .

After what Mr. Ritchie said on Friday there can be no doubt, we presume, that this will be the end of the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Board will never meet again. The good works that it did in the days of its ingenuous youth will be forgotten amid the misdeeds of its unhonoured age and the disgrace of its sudden and ignominious extinction. There is, indeed, some danger that less than justice may be done to its memory. Universal London will feel that it is well rid of a body which was so blind to its own dignity, so unmindful of the plainest precepts of public duty, so indifferent, indeed, to the ordinary restraints of public decency as the Metropolitan Board of Works has shown itself in the last few weeks.

If from Variation in words we pass on to Variation in phrases, we come upon a remarkable peculiarity of English Prose. The most ubiquitous type of phrase is that which expresses the genitival relation of noun to noun;—a relation which is symbolized by the preposition *of* in English, *de* in French, *von* in German. This relation is of such constant recurrence, that the language which can command the greatest variety in the representation of it has in this one feature alone an important advantage in the way of elasticity. It is a positive disadvantage to French that it has only the *de* phrase. The German is much richer. It has the Compound and the *von* phrase, and the flexional genitive in the case of Proper Names, and it can moreover bring in an Adjective. Where the French can only say 'La Grammaire de Grimm,' the Germans can say either 'Grimms Grammatik' or 'die Grimmsche Grammatik' or 'die Grammatik von Grimm.' We have all the turns possessed by the French and German, and in addition to these we have, what neither of those languages possesses, a power of structure by simple juxtaposition. We can say either 'an image of gold' or 'a golden image'—'a structure of wood' or 'a wooden structure'; we can choose whether we will say 'Johnson's style' or 'the style of Johnson,'—and besides these faculties, which are found elsewhere, we have the faculty peculiar to ourselves of saying 'a gold watch,' 'a silver chain,' 'a potato crop.'

How capacious is the public appetite for word-and-phrase variety, may be judged by the success of Carlyle's writings. Among the positive and recognized qualities of diction that can be attributed to him, none is more conspicuous than Variety; endless, inexhaustible variety in words and phrases. Flexibility can hardly be attributed to him, for there is rarely any rhythm in his movement; he is quick indeed, but he is rigid, and he advances by jerks. Though quick he is not rapid, he does not continually progress, does not carry us on, but illustrates one point by a marvellous variety of aspects or presentations, and that done he flies off to another;—producing rather a chaplet of illustrations than a discourse.

Among the materials which Diction has at command in order to produce the relief or pleasure of Variety is the alternative which frequently offers between Phrase and Compound. Thus Carlyle in the same page will be seen to write 'the World's History' and 'World-History.' In the matter of Compounds he was a great innovator, he asserted a new freedom in this respect for the English Language (though for that matter it was but the revival of an old function that had become well-nigh atrophied for lack of use) and he has been so far followed, that the door of admission for Compounds has certainly been greatly widened within the last forty years. This, no doubt, he took from his German reading, and however much he might repudiate the charge, broadly made, of taking his style from that source, he could hardly have disavowed this particular act of imitation. I apprehend that probably it was this very novelty of Compound-making which struck the general eye, and brought upon him that imputation of germanizing; an imputation, if applied to his style as a whole, as groundless as any ever advanced by critic. Here is an example of his art of compounding, especially in Adjectives;--

How each one of those dull leathern Diligences, with its leathern bag and 'The King is fled,' furrows up smooth France as it goes, through town and hamlet, ruffles the smooth public mind into quivering agitation of death-terror; then lumbers on, as if nothing had happened! Along all highways; towards the utmost borders; till all France is ruffled,—roughened up (metaphorically speaking)

into one enormous, desperate-minded, red-guggling Turkey Cock !—*French Rev.* II. iv. 4.

What a faculty of variety would be lost, if the practice of compound-making fell into desuetude, may be shewn by a simple example from the Psalms. In Psalm cxxxi. 1 our Bible has 'my heart is not haughty;' but in the Book of Common Prayer it is thus expressed:—'I am not high-minded.'

Among the resources of variation we must not omit to notice Collocation. Under this head may be mentioned the occasional postposition of the adjectival phrase to its substantive, as in the following example.

Churches the most remote.

They rest on the spontaneous consent of the whole Christian world, Churches the most remote agreeing independently to do honour to the same books.—George Salmon, D.D., *Introduction to New Testament*, p. 227.

But the most important means of producing the agreeableness of variety is by diversification of the sentence-type. I have known the advice given to a young man to make his sentences short. If this had been meant just to protect him from a premature attempt at sentences of wider range than he could well compass at first, it would have been unexceptionable advice. But, in the instance quoted, I know that, at the time, it was apprehended as a sure means for making the discourse clear, intelligible, and attractive. To this end it is altogether inadequate. But I fancy there does exist some such an impression as this, that there is a connection between perspicuity and short sentences. One might guess that it was under some such a general theory that the author of the next quotation formed his style. It is distinguished by the prevalence of the short sentence. I cannot say that I found, in reading through the very interesting article from which it is taken, that this uniformity improved the effect of the whole. On the contrary I thought the able and sympathetic writer did himself less than justice by confining himself to a pattern which, however light and airy at first seeming, becomes in a few pages all the more provokingly monotonous and inelastic, from its assumed character of springiness and sprightliness.

One has known men, great and small, more commonly small, who went through life steadily depreciating and vilipending all human beings who could be regarded as in the running with themselves. But among such, Bethell was *facile princeps*. He despised his predecessor as Chancellor, and spoke with contempt of his judgments. One day, under the impression that a judgment quoted was Lord Campbell's, he hastened to contemn it. But the laugh was turned when it was at once stated that the contemned judgment was his own. He was indeed beyond comparison, in his proper sphere, greater and brighter than most of those around him. But he showed far too plainly that he knew it. Modesty would have been a glory, being combined with that magnificent ability. And his tongue was incredibly sharp: and absolutely unbridled. It looks as though he never kept back any keen saying which occurred to him. And the serene, deliberate, and seemingly-affected manner in which he spoke, gave tenfold bitterness. It did not look like the outburst of a hasty temper at all. They did not seem *obiter dicta*, these vitriolic sayings. No mortal can afford thus to indulge his idiosyncrasy. He made enemies on every side: enemies who hated him with an incredible malignity. Each of them had a poisoned dart rankling in his soul. And the day came when this great lawyer, though holding his place in magnificent competence, was surrounded and assailed by a crowd of foes who were able to force him to descend from the highest place in the law.—*Longman's Magazine*, Dec. 1888;—'Lord Westbury,' by A. K. H. B.

For a certain space, this may do well enough, but as it goes on in the same continued *staccato*, the reader is overtaken with a feeling of sameness. The sense may be good, each sentence may be neat and smart, and yet the whole may be wearisome. To give pleasure there must be symmetry, and to this end there must be the relation of parts and members, and these must be at once diverse in size and harmonious in proportion. The short-sentence fallacy is the repetition in another guise of the short-word fallacy, already discussed.

In fact, there is no one rule, no single grand discovery, which can guide to an effective diction. It consists, not in one faculty, but in many. Diversity and multiplicity is of its essence, and this is what is conveyed in the term Variety.

Sir J. Bowring in his Life of Jeremy Bentham relates how

the great legist, who had a scheme for everything, had also his scheme for framing sentences. He held that a particular order should be observed, and that the best order once ascertained should never be departed from. The fruits, as seen in his own writings, offer the best comment upon the theory. His works, though full of the most valuable practical ideas, are so heavy and repulsive to the reader that they actually remained neglected and unknown until a Frenchman, M. Dumont, undertook to translate his wisdom to the world.

I may add another illustration to the same effect. The Committee of the American Philosophical Society, which was appointed to report upon the scientific value of Volapük, laid down a rule that the parts of a sentence should stand in a fixed order, and syntactical relations be expressed by a sort of regimental placement. For the exclusive purpose of conveying scientific ideas this semaphoric system might work; but such a syntax would be totally destitute of that quality of attractiveness, that gracious sympathetic physiognomy, which draws a reader on, and which constitutes what we call Literary quality.

If any student wishes to bring home to his mind what is meant by the importance of variety in sentences, let him set himself to the performance of a task, which I will prescribe for him. It shall be this;—he shall read steadily and conscientiously through one of the prose Tales of Chaucer, either the Melibeus, or the Parson's Tale. When Chaucer wrote naturally he wrote with that variety and lightness of touch which belongs to a poet who had a good vernacular tradition of prose aided and quickened by French culture. But when he was under the influence of his Latin texts he became deficient in variety. His sentences are faultlessly shaped, but their variety is so limited that the general effect is monotonous, and a sustained reading becomes very wearisome, so much so that it may be doubted whether any reader ever got through one of those prose pieces, otherwise than in the way of task-work. A paragraph from the Parson's Tale may be seen below in the historical part of this treatise.

And among the distinguished writers of our own day, I may instance Mr. Pater, whose sentences are often admirable

in themselves, but whose discourse is sometimes deficient in variety of sentence-type.

We saw above that an important element in Diction is variation in the choice of words. By this means the subject is presented in a variety of aspects corresponding to the varying phases of the narrative or argument. The importance of variation is great as it applies to words, but it is greater as it applies to sentences. Rarely (sometimes indeed, as we have seen, but rarely) does a good paragraph consist of a succession of sentences of one type; the rule is that there should be an indefinable but rhythmic change between Simplex, Duplex, Composita, Evoluta, and Mixed Sentences.

There is one function of the Simplex which may be noticed more particularly. It is what I will call the apophthegmatic function. Your discourse, we will suppose, is argumentative, and perhaps requires all the illustration of variety; you therefore not only urge it by a series of propositions almost self-evidencing, which are probably couched in the Composita—but at times you reason inductively or deductively in linked and rather long-drawn sentences of the type of Evoluta. Among these you will now and then intersperse a Simplex, perhaps a very brief one, as round as a bullet, which puts the whole theme in a nutshell—the kernel of the contention. This is the apophthegmatic use of the Simplex, an admirable and effective device, effective because eminently natural, and for the same reason thoroughly artistic. In the midst of the following quotation, there is a good example of this feature.

And when self-interest is embraced as a strong passion by the mind, it has a like facilitating consequence as regards the possession of various virtues. A man who has his own interest strongly before him can make vindictive and malicious feelings give way to it; that is to say, he can acquire with facility a habit of forgiveness. The same motive can give him gravity and application, and can preserve him from many frivolities, weaknesses, and caprices. One great vice produces many virtues. It attains successes which are missed by the frail and imperfect good who have not strength to form these habits or avoid these infirmities, simply because their high motives are weak and fluctuating; the lower motives are strong and steady. Society is thus able to produce men who are fabrics E D C M E

of virtues, who do not, like the volatile, leave their virtues to chance, but adopt them upon a system; but who at the same time may be said to possess the loan of them, rather than the fee-simple of them —who have the *use* of them, a fructifying use, without a true property in them. They are outside of him. The outward possessor is not their moral possessor.—J. B. Mozley, 'The Pharisees.'

The latest advance and the leading characteristic of modern prose is seen in the development of the paragraph. Ancient eloquence had its strong centres of nervous force gathered up in masterly sentences here and there distributed at proper stations in the discourse. These were the culminating eminences, the show pieces of the old world, their legacy of famous bits to be collected *in usum tironum*. Without denying that fine sentences may still be effectively made now and then, I would say that the sentence as a several thing is no longer the beacon of discourse. Or, if it is so, it is not, as with the ancients, the grand, the full, the magnificent sentence, but the terse, pithy, sometimes paradoxical, apophthegm. Yet, the grand sentence still bears sway in the fond imagination of classically educated scholars, and the following passage by the author of *Friends in Council* is a witness to the survival of that illusive tradition, which dates from the fifteenth or the sixteenth century.

Sir Arthur. Pray lay down the lines for us, Ellesmere. . . . Pray tell us what a weighty sentence should be.

Ellesmere. It should be powerful in its substantives, choice and discreet in its adjectives, nicely correct in its verbs: not a word that could be added, nor one which the most fastidious would venture to suppress: in order lucid, in sequence logical, in method perspicuous; and yet with a pleasant and inviting intricacy which disappears as you advance in the sentence: the language, throughout, not quaint, not obsolete, not common, and not new: its several clauses justly proportioned and carefully balanced, so that it moves like a well-disciplined army organized for conquest: the rhythm, not that of music, but of a higher and more fantastic melodiousness, submitting to no rule, incapable of being taught: the substance and the form alike disclosing a happy union of the soul of the author to the subject of his thought, having, therefore, individuality without personal predominance: and withal there must be a sense of felicity about it, declaring it to be the product of a happy moment, so that

you feel it will not happen again to that man who writes the sentence, or to any other of the sons of men, to say the like thing so choicely, tersely, mellifluously, and completely.—*Realmah*, ch. vii.

The surrender of this transplanted and exotic notion, when that surrender becomes general, will be the fall of the last of those strongholds by which classicism has so long curbed the freedom of English Prose.

We sometimes see unavailing efforts after a grand effect by a sentence *de longue haleine*. It rarely answers the author's intention. In the following example from the pen of J. Russell Lowell the middle sentence is too long, and by this excess the whole paragraph is deprived of melody and unity.

And for one of the most perfectly effective of the influences for which he was seeking, where should he look if not to religion? The sublimities and amenities of outward nature might suffice for William Wordsworth, might for him have almost filled the place of a liberal education; but they elevate, teach, and, above all, console the imaginative and solitary only, and suffice to him who already suffices to himself. The thought of a God vaguely and vaporously dispersed throughout the visible creation, the conjecture of an animating principle that gives to the sunset its splendours, its passion to the storm, to cloud and wind their sympathy of form and movement, that sustains the faith of the crag in its forlorn endurance, and of the harebell in the slender security of its stem, may inspire or soothe, console or fortify the man whose physical and mental fibre is so sensitive that, like the spectroscope, it can both feel and record these impalpable impulses and impressions, these impersonal vibrations of identity between the fragmentary life that is in himself and the larger life of the universe whereof he is a particle. Such supersensual emotions might help to make a poem, but they would not make a man, still less a social being. Absorption in the whole would not tend to that development of the individual which was the cornerstone of Wordsworth's edifice.—*Wordsworthiana.*

We can go beyond this, and produce a whole paragraph made of one sentence.

But I am brought to more serious pause than I had anticipated in putting final accent on the main sentences in this—already, as men now count time, old—book of mine, because since it was written, not only these untried instruments of action, but many

equally novel methods of education and systems of morality have come into vogue, not without a certain measure of prospective good in them;—college education for women,—out-of-college education for men: positivism with its religion of humanity, and negativism with its religion of Chaos,—and the like, from the entanglement of which no young people can now escape, if they would; together with a mass of realistic, or materialistic, literature and art, founded mainly on the theory of nobody's having any will, or needing any master; much of it extremely clever, irresistibly amusing, and enticingly pathetic; but which is all nevertheless the mere whirr and dust-cloud of a dissolutely reforming and vulgarly manufacturing age, which when its dissolutions are appeased, and its manufactures purified, must return in due time to the understanding of the things that have been, and are, and shall be hereafter, though for the present concerned seriously with nothing beyond its dinner and its bed.—John Ruskin, *New Preface* (1888) *to* '*Sesame and Lilies.*'

A sustained sentence of this kind helps us to apprehend that the experience of time has wrought in favour of short and varied sentences, as a means of producing ease and flexibility of diction. And here it is exceedingly interesting to observe that Mr. Ruskin in the reprint of the Second Volume of his *Modern Painters* has repeatedly broken up his long sentences into shorter ones, himself also sometimes calling attention in a footnote to the fact.

The term paragraph can hardly be applied to anything short of three sentences. We sometimes see a satisfying result from three sentences, something which is felt to be a kind of whole;—whole at least as a distinct member of larger discourse. The following is a fair example.

The first impulse of man is to seek for enjoyment. He lives with more or less impetuosity, more or less irregularity, to conquer for himself a home and blessedness of a mere earthly kind. Not till later (in how many cases never) does he ascertain that on earth there is no such home: that his true home lies beyond the world of sense, is a celestial home.—Thomas Carlyle, *James Carlyle.*

The principle of variety in diction is closely related to that element which Shelley in his Essay 'A Defence of Poetry' recognized as a poetic element in prose writers of the highest

type. It imports a moral softening to obviate the rigidity which might otherwise overtake the process of intellectual ratiocination. It gives the moral attraction which Bentham's writings lacked, and which can never be attained by an artificial language like Volapük. But it must depend on sympathy in the writer, and it cannot be worked by rules. Porson, in a criticism on Gibbon's style which on the whole was laudatory, alleged against him that he observed a rule of variation to the damage of perspicuity. This is a good rebuke upon the notion of writing well by mere attention to rules.

> Sometimes, in his anxiety to vary his phrase, he becomes obscure; and, instead of calling his personages by their names, defines them by their birth, alliance, office, or other circumstances of their history. Thus an honest gentleman is often described by a circumlocution, lest the same word should be twice repeated in the same page.—*Letters to Travis*, Preface, p. xxix.

The greatest master of the English language that ever lived (among prose writers) was habitually conscious of the importance of variation, and of the large faculty of English in this respect;—his writings abound in illustrations of it, and the habit would break out in his conversation. Boswell has told us how he would sometimes iterate a remark with a variation of phraseology.

> Talking of the comedy of the Rehearsal, he said, 'It has not wit enough to keep it sweet.' This was easy, he therefore caught himself, and pronounced a more round sentence: 'It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.'

The perfection of diction lies in flexibility, whereby language is made to exhibit a power of being moulded to the turns and shades of thought. It is manifest that variation in vocabulary, and in cast of sentence, are main helps to this plasticity in language. And it is also manifest that without this plasticity there could be no such a thing as Style. The culture of Diction is the preparatory stage for the formation of Style.

The variation produced by such means blends almost indistinguishably with the use of metaphor, which is a further heightening of the power of variation by a change of the

light in which a given theme is viewed;—for it is the office of Metaphor to describe one thing in terms that properly belong to another, and thus it brings in not only the agreeable relief of variety, but also that illustration or enforcement of thought which springs from analogy or parable. All this is but another and a deeper form of variation. We must not, however, at present pursue this consideration any farther, as it belongs to a later stage of our plan.

So far as we have gone we may sum up by saying that Diction is the apparel of thought when presented for public reception. The inducement to a certain Elevation of manner, the desire for Lucidity, the search after Variety, all three spring from one motive, and that motive is a proper respect for those before whom we appear, making us wish to shew them honour, to win their attention, and to avoid being tedious to them. The social principle is at the root of all linguistic growth, as was admirably shewn (if I may trust my memory at a moment when I am without means of reference) by Professor Sayce in his book upon the Principles of Philology. It is by the larger and higher action of this same social principle that language attains that dignified and graceful expansion which we indicate by the name of Literary Diction.

All graces of discourse proceed from a desire to appear well before others, to win their favour, and to retain it. A writer may be quite master of his subject, and yet he may not be able to present it advantageously, for want of sympathy with his audience. It is not enough that our sentences be correct, weighty, forcible,—they must be persuasive. We must not drive, but lead. Otherwise we may incur that charge of 'ploughing periods' which was brought against the style of Eustace's *Classical Tour through Italy*, as we learn from the Editor's Preface to the Sixth Edition.[1]

And when we fully see the importance of this social principle we may be in a position to do justice to the great services which have been rendered to English Prose by the newspaper

[1] In the historical chapters below, I purpose to give a sample of this book, such as may enable the reader to try this charge against the author.

Press. That large and influential order of men, which daily provides news and comments upon public affairs for the millions of English readers, is animated by one highly developed professional instinct, and that instinct is the social sense of their relation to the public. Under the salutary influence of this honourable sentiment, continued through the tradition of generations, our English Prose has (more than by any other means) ascertained the right pitch of Elevation, and the most available means of attaining Lucidity accompanied with the relief of Variety.

CHAPTER VI

THE LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF PROSE DICTION—*continued*

§ 4. Of Novelty.—Wear and Tear—Renovation and sources of new material—Relative advantages of English and French in respect of renovating supplies of word and phrase—Word-coining—A list of recent coinage—The Return to the mother tongue.

§ 5. Of Figure.—The most inexhaustible source of Novelty—Simile, more or less expanded—Metaphor—Archbishop Whately on Metaphor—The vast agency of Metaphor—Natural affinity of Literary Taste with Philology: Archbishop Trench—The origin of the *New English Dictionary*—Beneficial influence of Poetry on Prose—Poet's Prose—Personification—A grammatical unconformability—Shoddy—A fragment by Adam Smith—In all ornamentation the greater end is to be kept in view, and Fine Writing is to be eschewed.

§ 4. Of Novelty.

From Variety we pass naturally to the consideration of Novelty. The principle of Novelty is necessarily involved in that of Variety; for it is manifest that variation in diction cannot be maintained unless there is from time to time some new supply of material and of form.

Every reader of literature must be struck with the fact that words and phrases are apt to wear out. Words and phrases which have once been pleasing, and have been favourites of fashion, lose their popularity, become distasteful and are cast aside. We need not go very far back to find examples of this. Adjectives and Adverbs are the Parts of Speech most exposed to the caprice of fashion. We do not now say 'a proper man' as Clarendon did repeatedly in his portraiture of contemporaries. Within living memory new adjectives have reared their heads above the common level, have had a run of popularity, and have then relapsed into neglect and obscurity. This happened to *instructive* and *suggestive*.

An Adverb of great vogue was *marvellous* as an intensi-

fier of adjectives, where now we say 'very, highly, exceedingly.' Thus 'a marvellous strange discourse' in Hooker, *Laws*, III. xi. 17; 'it seemed marvellous hard,' *id.* IV. xi. 6.

A conspicuous phrasal Adverb in Clarendon's time was 'upon the matter,' signifying much the same as when we now say 'virtually, practically, in effect.' Thus in iv. 87—'and had upon the matter the sole government of that province committed to them.' In iv. 143—'not that the presence of the bishops in that time was so essential, that no act could pass without them; which had given them a voice, upon the matter, as negative as the king's.' In iv. 305—'by his majesty's enacting those two bills, he had upon the matter approved the circumstances of their passage, which had been by direct violence and force of arms.' And in the following generation Gilbert Burnet, writing in 1705 the Preface to *The History of My Own Times*, said:—

'I alter nothing of what I wrote in the first draught of this work, only I have left out a great deal that was personal to myself, and to those I am descended from: so that this is upon the matter the same work, with very little change made in it.'

The use of the word 'like' where we now say 'likely' enters into several phrases, which are now disused. Thus:—

They resolved to remove all persons out of their way who were like to stand in their way.—Clarendon, *History*, iv. 293.

The next Couple enrolled had like to have carried it, if one of the witnesses had not deposed &c.—Joseph Addison, *Spectator*, No. 608.

In phrases where we now use *basis* the writers of the seventeenth century used *stock*.

They well enough knew that they should never be able to hold up and carry on the war against the king in England but by the help of an army out of Scotland; which they had no hope to procure but upon the stock of alteration of the government of the Church; to which that whole nation was furiously inclined.—Clarendon, *History*, vi. 229.

Sometimes it is easier to see the fact of such decay and its consequences than to discover the cause. I know nothing in philology more strangely unaccountable than our disuse of

that popular pronoun *man*, the Personal pronoun Impersonal, which is retained with such manifest advantage in modern German. We can hardly imagine the French Language dropping its frequent 'on' as in 'on dit.' No small amount of innovation has been occasioned or provoked by this seemingly capricious freak of our speech-genius. We have had to cast about for all sorts of substitutes, now using *they*, now trying *people*, now compelling *you* to play the part of an impersonal pronoun. A violent effort was made to recover an equivalent for the missing Pronoun by means of the Numeral *one*. But this latter has proved something very like a failure, by reason of its proneness to an egotistical tone. The most noticeable result has been an inordinate extension of the functions of the Passive Voice, and it is more by means of the Passive Verb than by any of the other instrumentalities that we have managed to compass the construction of an impersonal phrase. Thus:

What then are the reasons why it is sought to reject so weighty a mass of external evidence?—G. Salmon, *Intr. N. T.* p. 477.

These examples are not produced in order to establish what every reader already knows, that expressions of all kinds are apt to get antiquated, but only to revive and illustrate a fact which has an obvious bearing on the present section. New material must be found somehow. Even the Latin purist confesses so much as this. After speaking of the riskiness of new and unauthorized expressions, he says that nevertheless it *must* be risked—*audendum tamen!*[1]

There are various sources which supply or suggest new material to fill the void of that which is effete. The sources with which we are most familiar are the Classics. But this supply is now well-nigh used up, and it is worth while to consider what other sources there are. Next to the Classics come the modern languages, especially French. Then there is our own old poetry, and the archaisms of our elder prose, and then there are familiar colloquial phrases, also provincialisms rustic or urban, and finally there is slang. From all these sources something may be taken for the renovation of diction.

[1] Quintilian, *Inst. Orator.* I. 5. § 72.

At the close of the following example a subjunctive phrase, unused in literature, has been fetched from some old-fashioned source, perhaps rustic provincialism, and planted with good effect.

> Fell persisted. He was printing the book at his own charge, and therefore thought that it should express his sentiments. Besides, he was by nature and up-bringing one of those blustering tyrants who when they attain a position of authority will have everything their own way, right reason be or none.—Andrew Clark, *Wood's City of Oxford*, vol. i. p. 21 (Oxford Historical Society, 1889).

A touch of novelty is obtained sometimes by an unusual substantive which may be justified by some familiar verbal phrase, thus:—it has long been common to say 'Easter falls early this year,' but it struck me as new when I redd in *The Times* of April 4, 1890, the following sentence:—'The early fall of Easter naturally brings with it thoughts of cricket.' More frequent, perhaps, is the reverse process; I mean the start of a new verb from some familiar noun.

Another example of this, which I may call the grammatical source of novelty, is when a verb, hitherto intransitive, is made either to govern transitively, or, what implies the same thing, to produce a participle passive, as *operated* in the following from a description of Morgan's Automatic Electric Police-Signal System:—

> A pointer operated by clockwork swings over the face of this dial, whenever a call is sent from any one of the lamp-posts, stopping directly over the number corresponding to the lamp-post whence the call has been sent.—*The Times*, April 4, 1890.

But here a remark, which applies indeed generally to all devices of novelty, may be made with special point;—consider these when they offer, but do not send your mind out to search for them.

In respect of renovating supplies for prose there is no nation in a better plight than we are. We have great reserves of poetry, of early prose, and of provincial dialect. If we only compare our stores with those of the French, we quickly perceive that the advantage is greatly upon our side. The French have little early poetry which is remote enough to be eligible as fresh material—I mean poetry of a quality fit to

acquire educational currency; and without this means of popularity it can hardly become available as new material. It seems as if the national instinct was conscious of this scarcity, and as if the recent revival of the *Chanson de Roland* as an educational book, had been instigated by this apprehension. Their old prose is excellent, and might contribute something, but it only goes back to the thirteenth century. Within the last forty years the French language has indeed incorporated much new material, but it has been drawn almost entirely from the region of *argot*.

Our elder prose is a mine which remains yet to be explored. In the prose diction of the tenth century there is a rich supply of fresh material which only waits for the efforts of the quarryman. At the present time a more peculiar interest attaches to every instance of innovation which is drawn from the native source.

In this respect the Americans are more enterprizing than we are; they have the sense of liberty which goes with the recent expansion of their literature, and they are not yet trammelled with the bands of conventionality. Mark Twain writes *dampen*:

> They had gathered from many points of the compass and from many lands, but not one was missing; there was no tale of sickness or death among the flock to dampen the pleasure of the reunion.—*The New Pilgrim's Progress*, c. 1.

And Mr. Bryce with his *quieten* has imported the innovation:—

> The two bodies [the Senate and the House] are not hostile elements in the nation, striving for supremacy, but servants of the same master, whose word of rebuke will quieten them.—James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. i. p. 250.

The motive which brings forward such words is manifest at first sight. It is the desire for Novelty, and this desire is so universal that it must be reckoned with and provided for. One point I would here call attention to. Whereas formerly, and even down to within living memory, such desire was gratified by a garnish of foreign words, Latin, Greek, French, or by some new device upon the basis of classic formatives in *-osity* and *-ation*, the public taste, at least in the more culti-

vated circles, has now had enough of these, and is turning for novelty to the oldest sources of the mother tongue.

One of the sources of Novelty is what is called word-coining, that is to say, making up a new form of word for the occasion.

In a recent Report on the Boarding Out System, which is dated at Birmingham in 1889, the promoters of that system are apprehensive that there is some tendency to 'institutionize' it, if they may coin a word.

In a review of Memoirs of the great Head-Master of Uppingham School, which appeared in *The Spectator* of March 1, 1890, we are told that although Mr. Skrine's book contains some chapters of quite singular ability, and although Mr. Rawnsley's book also is most admirable, yet they are both chargeable with the same fault—'highflyingness, if we may coin a word.'

Goldsmith, in his *Citizen of the World*, coined 'somethingness'—'What an unusual share of somethingness in his whole appearance!'

Arthur Hugh Clough in 1853, writing to Ralph W. Emerson, coined *belieffulness*:—'And there is a hopefulness and a belieffulness, so to say, on your side, which is a great compensation.'

Dr. Hayes, in his *Open Polar Sea*, Chap. xxxv., coined *northness*:—'Long lines of cackling geese were sailing far overhead, winging their way to some more remote point of northness.'

Miss Florence Nightingale coined *missionariness*; Dr. Martineau (in his translation of Ewald's *History of Israel*) coined *non-namelessness*; Carlyle coined *Saxon-dom*; J. A. Froude coined *scoundreldom* and *rascaldom*; Mr. Walter Besant in *The Monks of Thelema*, Chap. iv. coined *prigdom*.

It is easy to see that this coining is the artificial making of new combinations out of those materials which are tabulated above in the Chapter on Philology, and the bulk of the instances for the last two or three generations are seen to be novel manipulations of the Saxon element. This is an observation which is here made only in passing;—for its fuller import and significance, we must return to it by-and-by.

Novelty is not easy to illustrate by examples. For all successful innovations are promptly adopted, become general, and are no longer to be recognized as novelties. It is only by comparison of the state of diction at wide intervals of time, say a hundred years, that we are made aware of the constant operation of this motive of change.

Examples we may certainly adduce, but they will not be the best of their kind. The best are too slight, delicate, and ephemeral. They are like those summer blossoms, which open but to one day's sun and evaporate their freshness in the noontide. Those which can be handled and produced are of a more robust and coarser sort. They may serve, however, as landmarks to this perpetual movement, and they may quicken the eye for the observation of more delicate specimens. Such specimens fall under the notice of the practised observer in every new book that is worth reading, and sometimes even in the day's newspaper.

Here I add a selection of the rougher sort of that coinage which has been issued mostly in the time of the last generation. Not that I am quite sure in every case that they are of new coinage, but I apprehend they are so, and I feel confident that it is so on the whole. Particularly to be noticed among them are the specimens of the Saxon revival, as in *Ashamedness*, *Featureliness*, *Knowingness*, *Livingness*, *Open-mindedness*, *Seamy*, *Settledness*, *Shaky*, *Unknowable*, *Unyieldingness*, *Uphillward*.

Appointee.—In the so-called government of Lord North, George III. was the government. Lord North was not only his appointee, but his agent.—Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*.

Artistry.—There is an artistry of life as well as of literature, and the perfect knighthood of Sidney is no less precious to the world than the genius of Spenser.—Robert Lytton, quoted in Hamerton's *Intellectual Life*, viii. 2.

Ashamedness.—There is a growing feeling, which I can only describe as an 'ashamedness' of the Anglican Church, as if our grand old Anglican communion contrasted unfavourably with the Church of Rome.—S. Wilberforce, *He being dead yet speaketh*.

Carnalization.—The danger [viz. of ignoring a Future Life] lies in the gradual carnalization of our nature which would follow the extinction of those ennobling hopes which have lifted men above

mere animalism and given to Duty and to Love an infinite extension.—Frances Power Cobbe, *The Hopes of the Human Race*, p. viii.

Criticaster.—I have the heartiest contempt for that school of criticasters (as Charles Reade called them) who are always praising the dead at the expense of the living.—James Payn, *Some Literary Recollections*.

Dispeace.—The Austrians themselves would be the last to deny that they are a divided nation. They are going through a stage of internal dispeace such as most countries have had to encounter at some period of their history.—*The Times*, April 17, 1878.

Expertise.—There is a real danger that we may become subject to the tyranny of *expertise*.—But modern *expertise* is very confident, intolerant, and domineering; nor are Experts in handwriting the only offenders in this respect.—*The Times*, March 20, 1876.

Fad.—This is a recent instance of a word adopted by society and literature from a provincial dialect. See Miss Jackson's *Shropshire Glossary*, v. 'Fad.'

AN EXPENSIVE 'FAD.'—A curious book might be written on the fantasies or fancies of great Corporations, the dreams to which they adhere with the constancy and unreason so often exhibited by hypochondriacal individuals. That they do have such fancies or dreams is certain, and like the fixity of style in a great newspaper, written perhaps by twenty hands, is one of the least explicable of mental phenomena. Why should thirteen men out of twenty-four, themselves constantly changing, think alike, and think wrongly, for eighty years, about an establishment in which they have no personal interest? That they can do so, however, is clear from a short, bitter, but most conclusive despatch, in which the Duke of Argyll, it appears, has terminated the Stud system of India. . . .

. . . . . .

There is absolutely *no* reason for spending the money, except an almost historical 'fad' of the India House, kept up, the Duke of Argyll says, by delusive reports from India about cost, and by that curious tenacity which corporations often exhibit, which induced the Court of Directors to adhere for years to their trade, in the teeth of demonstration almost mathematical in its completeness that the trade was conducted at a dead loss recouped out of Indian taxes.—*The Spectator*, May 9, 1874.

Featureliness.—As the picturesqueness, the featureliness of society diminishes, aristocracy loses the single instrument of its peculiar power.—Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, iv. p. 94.

Finality.—But, above all, let us beware of 'finality.' We cannot pretend that the Common Prayer Book is perfect.—*The Guardian*, January 29, 1851.

It was at the time of the Reform Bill that *finality* took this particular sense; the Whigs talked of that as a 'final' measure, no change was to be made thereafter in matters of franchise. Lord John Russell got the nickname of 'Finality John.'

Intellectualist.—I find something of the same key in the Autobiography of Mr. Mill, the model intellectualist, rather than philosopher, of our times.—James Baldwin Brown, *The Higher Life*, iii. p. 65.

International.—Jeremy Bentham claimed to be the author of this word, which has now grown so familiar to our eyes and ears.

The following is from the American *Medical Gazette* (quoted in *The Times*, Oct. 6, 1871):

One word as to the editions before us. The first is the author's edition placed in this market by the English publishers, who have an established branch in this city; the second is a reprint, far inferior in mechanical execution, made for the profit of the American publishers at the author's expense. Too much of this sort of business is daily done in our country, and its profitable continuance casts discredit not only on the vendors, but on the purchasers of purloined wares. . . . As regards the present work, we sincerely trust that a sense of common honesty will induce our readers to purchase the English edition—thereby making some slight return to the author for the pleasure and profit which he affords them—rather than the 'shabby American reprint,' the gain from which is presumably his loss. In the absence of an international copyright, the only remedy for a great injustice lies in the honourable instincts of individual members of the community, and, in our profession at least, it is time that this remedy were applied.

Jural.—This word is a modern device, perhaps by Dr. Whewell, to have a word in the region of Law correspondent to *moral* in the region of Ethics.

The part played by jurists in French history, and the sphere of jural conceptions in French thought, have always been remarkably large.—Sir H. S. Maine, *Ancient Law*, c. 4.

Kaleidoscopic.—It seems to us almost absurd to deny that the power of kaleidoscopic variation and multiplication of the same general characteristic, is the main key to Dickens's humour and power.—*The Spectator*, Feb. 7, 1874.

Knowingness.—Such qualities in an inferior, who could always be treated with authority in spite of his superior knowingness, had necessarily a fatal fascination for Tom.—*The Mill on the Floss*, by George Eliot, c. vi.

Livingness.—The evident livingness with which all things proceed from a less perfect to a more perfect state.—Alexander Ewing, *Revelation considered as Light*, xii.

Loveable.—The Princess Beatrice has won a large share of popular respect and regard by loveable domestic qualities which, in the highest place as in the lowest, are woman's best and truest titles to honour.—*The Times*, May 15, 1885.

Mannerist.—Dickens became comparatively tiresome as he became a mannerist, or, in other words, as he took to imitating himself and trying to reproduce in cold blood the effects which came naturally from his spontaneous youthful spirits.—*The Saturday Review*, July 18, 1874.

Millionaire.—In the present Parliament it is difficult for a Member to reach his seat without treading on a millionaire's toes.—*The Spectator*, Dec. 20, 1873.

Neolithic.—Of the recent stone age. This term with its converse Palæolithic was invented by Sir John Lubbock at the time when the discovery of stone weapons in the valley of the Somme opened to our view a period of human activity long prior to that which had already been known as the Stone Age.

Objective.—A word coined by S. T. Coleridge, to stand for the opposite of subjective.

There was a time when it was supposed that sound, heat, and colours, have what Coleridge would have called an objective existence. It was thought that there were qualities in things which correspond to feelings, and that sound, heat, and colour might continue to exist after all sentient creatures had been annihilated.—H. Parker, *The Nature of the Fine Arts* (1885), p. 221.

Open-mindedness.—How far should open-mindedness go in this matter of so-called Spiritualism? It seems very fair and plausible to argue that there may be hosts of forces in the world about which we know nothing, and that no chance of investigating these should

be neglected. History is full of odd stories, candid and puzzled searchers truly say, which bear a singular resemblance to old wives' fables on the one hand, and to phenomena which may be witnessed at the small charge of one guinea on the other. Surely it is worth while to pay the guinea, they argue, and if the phenomena were exhibited simply as odd events, there seems no reason why the ordinary laws of supply and demand should be interfered with. There are people so far from being fair and open-minded that they will say to investigators, 'If such forces as you suspect existed, is it likely that they would not invariably but often be connected with gentlemen of unknown antecedents, who exhibit them for hire?' To which the open-minded reply, with perfect logic, that as the forces are still unknown, and as we have no information about them, we cannot be sure but that they may, now and then, accompany strolling adventurers.—*The Daily News*, Nov. 1, 1876.

Optimism.—Optimism means the view that whatever is, is the best possible.—*The Spectator*, Nov. 7, 1874.

Palmary.—For these and other points I would simply refer to the unanswered and unanswerable arguments of Dean Burgon in his palmary work, and to the decisive judgment of Dr. Scrivener, who without any hesitation maintains the authenticity of the whole passage.—F. C. Cook, *The Revised Version of the First Three Gospels* (1882), p. 123.

Pedantocracy.—This word was coined by J. Stuart Mill in a letter to Comte, who caught it up and flung it about him right and left ever after.—Professor Bain in *Mind*, xvi. 527.

Pēlicotetics means The Science of Quantity or of Number.

For the science of Number the reader is referred to such treatises as Leslie's Philosophy of Arithmetic, and Sandeman's Pelicotetics.—Charles Girdlestone, *Number: a Link between Divine Intelligence and Human* (1875), p. 3.

Pessimist was (I imagine) a retort upon the word *Optimist*, which originated as a term of debate.

Quietude.—If the career of the Empire proved anything, it proved that the 'order' which comes from repression is the most treacherous kind of quietude, and that underneath the superficial calm smoulder terrible fires of anarchy.—*The Times*, October 22, 1877.

Racial.—What are the causes or forces, individual and social temperamental and racial, that have determined the moral develop

ment of humanity?—William Knight, *Nineteenth Century*, Sept. 1878.

Rationalistic.—The Greeks, with some few exceptions, did not trouble themselves about historical evidence. They took the plays of Æschylus for history, without curiously inquiring how Æschylus could know all which he seemed to know. This acquiescent faith was a natural accompaniment of the doctrine that the poet was inspired. The Romans were more rationalistic, and understood that narrative is not always history.—H. Parker, *The Nature of the Fine Arts* (1885), p. 232.

Realism.—There is nothing accidental in the work of Ben Jonson: no casual inspiration, no fortuitous impulse, ever guides or misguides his genius aright or astray. And this crowning and damning defect of a tedious and intolerable realism was even exceptionally wilful and premeditated.—A. C. Swinburne, *Nineteenth Century*, April 1888.

Ritualist.—A term that sprang into existence or at least into significance somewhere about 1870.

Perhaps, then, you will allow me, who am myself no ritualist, although bound to many ritualists by affection, . . .—E. B. Pusey, *Letter to the Times*, March 19, 1874.

Sacerdotalism.—A home-made form, and of the present century. Used by Dean Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*, Book xiv. c. 2. In the following passage a veteran statesman treats it as a newfangled word:

The spirit of priestcraft, or, as the present age, fond of long words, calls it, the spirit of sacerdotalism, has been continually engaged in extending the spiritual and restricting the temporal power.—Earl Russell, *Recollections* (1875), c. 1, p. 144.

Sanitation.—I first saw this word in the following manner:

SANITATION.—The Sanitary Conference assembled at Leamington yesterday. Dr. B. Carder, of London, read a paper on the present possibilities of sanitary science. He said that 60,000 lives were annually sacrificed in this country by the seven principal types of zymotic disease, or in other words by diseases more or less preventible.—Oct. 6, 1877.

Scientist.—One remembers an old story of Newton, in the

plenitude of his powers and of his marvellous discoveries, confessing to his immeasurable ignorance; comparing himself to a child who had only gathered a few pebbles on the shore of a boundless sea. This is possibly a myth, like others of those ages of reverence which have long since gone. Our modern scientists (as it is the fashion to call them) are certainly not animated by any such spirit of modest humility.—'Modern Scientific Materialism,' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, Nov. 1874, p. 520.

Seamy.—Mr. Bright is not, indeed, an impartial judge of what the Church did in the times to which he reverted. He sees only her shortcomings, faults, and seamy side.—*The Times*, Feb. 11, 1880.

Seascape.—That seascape, like the *Market Cart*, like the *Watering Place* (pictures which I shall not describe: they may be seen in London any day), is great indeed with that peculiar grace and charm of Gainsborough.—Frederick Wedmore, 'The Rise of Naturalism in English Art,' *Macmillan's Magazine*, March 1876.

Settledness.—The general want of settledness is seen in the ease with which the population move from place to place.—James Bryce, *Transcaucasia* (1877) p. 25.

Shaky.—But, at all events, if our young people are unmusical, it is not for want of teaching. Even in middle-class society a girl would rather be shaky in her grammar than unable to play the 'Songs without Words.'—*The Daily News*, July 21, 1874.

Solidarity.—Further, the organs of speech act and react upon each other; the frequent play of a given set of muscles modifies the action of neighbouring or related muscles; there is, to use a word which, if not now English, soon will be, a certain *solidarity* between them all; and organs accustomed to the deep gutturals of the Arabic, the hissing and lisping sounds of the English, or the nasals of the French and Portuguese, are with great difficulty trained to the pure articulation of languages like the Italian, in which such elements do not exist.—George P. Marsh, *Lectures on the English Language*, New York, Scribner, 1860.

Specialist.—Indeed, it does not appear that in a state of society so advanced in the different specialities as ours is, men were ever intended to do more than develop by education a few of their natural gifts. The only man who came near to a complete education was Leonardo da Vinci, but such a personage would be impossible to-day. No contemporary Leonardo could be at the same time a leader in fine art, a great military and civil engineer, and a discoverer in theoretical science; the specialists have gone too far

for him. Born in our day, Leonardo would have been either a specialist or an amateur.—P. G. Hamerton, *The Intellectual Life*, p. 130.

Storiologist.—In *The Academy* Jan. 9, 1886, the word appears for the first time in my experience. The author is W. R. S. Ralston and the subject *Italian Popular Tales* by T. F. Crane. The full phrase is 'comparative storiologists'—and this is enough to indicate its sense, and to shew that there was room for the new word. At a later stage of the same article occurs the equivalent phrase 'comparers of popular tales.'

Transliteration.—I spell this word Sanhedri*n* throughout, because it is evidently a mere transliteration of the Greek *συνέδριον*. —F. W. Farrar, *The Life &c.* c. 2, note.

Unknowable.—A recent construction out of homely material, viz. Saxon *un-* and *know*: functionized by the Romanesque *-able*. The word is most associated with the philosophy of the English Kantians, and probably was formed by one of them, Hamilton, Mansel, or Herbert Spencer.

The very same arguments which prove God to be unknowable, likewise prove the solar system to be unknowable.—*The Church Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1875, p. 71.

Unyieldingness.—A specimen of the new freedom of expression which the return to native idiom has rewarded us with.

The Pope, too, made the difficulty of the part France had to play very provokingly great by his absolute and impracticable unyieldingness.—T. Adolphus Trollope, *Life of Pius IX.* (1877), vol. ii. p. 124.

Uphillward.—This word, a token of the Gothic revival, is used and perhaps invented by Dr. F. W. Farrar:

The difficulty and narrowness of virtue's uphillward path.—*Eternal Hope* (1878), p. 90.

Vaticanism.—The question between Mr. Gladstone and his opponents is one, not of probability, but of principles; and what Mr. Gladstone may be admitted to have done in 'Vaticanism,' is to show more in detail than he had done before, that the spirit of the Roman Church, as illustrated by its highest teachers, is in contradiction to and defiance of, the spirit of modern civilisation.—*The Hour*, Feb. 25, 1875.

Votation.—A word recently contrived as an equivalent to the French *plébiscite*. Used repeatedly by T. Adolphus Trollope, in his *Life of Pius IX.* (1877), as :.

From the time that the Italian monarch accepted the votation which annexed the Legations to the kingdom of Italy, nothing has induced the Pope to waver for an instant!—Vol. ii. p. 122.

Authors love new words, but they are often afraid to venture on coining them. If their material affords fair occasion for the introduction of a word which though old may be strange to the reader, they generally seize the offer. It adds freshness to history and sometimes local colouring. Mr. Freeman is not afraid of being seen to rejoice in it. This belongs to the very instinct of the historian, and if he differs from others in this respect it is only a difference in degree. In the following quotation *declinature* belongs to this category, as being an old expression known in Scotland to the technicalities of the law.

declinature.

Accordingly, on the 18th (November 1596), Black appeared before the Council and declined its jurisdiction. After some discussion, the final decision upon his case was postponed till the 30th. The Commissioners at once sent the declinature to all the Presbyteries, requesting them to testify by their subscriptions their agreement with the course which had been pursued at Edinburgh.—S. R. Gardiner, *History of England*, 1603–1642, Ch. ii.

The coining industry in the present age of English Prose will be found to draw its materials mainly from the vernacular, and far less than formerly from classical sources. I pass over the reasons and motives for this change because I have touched on them elsewhere, and here I will only notice that it is safer for the writer—especially if his philological education has been neglected or if he belongs to the belletristic school, which vaunts it as a tenet that philology is of no avail in the practice of literature—safer, I say, for such a writer to make new words out of English material, where mother-wit may serve him, than to risk the ticklish construction of new Latin compounds. It was in an evil hour that the writer of the following passage was driven by his fate to put together

the two Latin words *pons* a bridge and *facere* to make, deeming that they together would naturally produce such an adjective as *pontifacial*, a word that to every scholar must suggest, not the act of making, but the state of looking or of facing, from *facies* a face. It may be contended that the writer sought to avoid the pontifical associations likely to cling to *pontificial*; but how will that justify a new word which does not carry the sense it was designed to convey?

For, though not the longest bridge in the world, that over the Forth may, in many respects, claim to be the most notable triumph of *pontifacial* art of which history has preserved any record.—March 4, 1890.

Phrasal Novelty.

In the invention of new phrases, one of the happiest strokes of modern times was Mr. M. Arnold's 'sweetness and light.' This was new and bold and successful. It was a phrase that was wanted and people took kindly to it.

But a dashing innovation of this kind must be rare, and is hardly to be emulated. In a new turn of phrase the merit of novelty may be secured even where the component elements are old and familiar, the change slight, and the suggestion obvious. The fact is that in prose the tinge of novelty in which the new is only just removed a perceptible space from the old, that degree of novelty which will refresh without drawing off the mind, is precisely that which is most generally desirable. In the following quotation there is just this lightest touch of novelty in the phrase

ease without easiness.

By the death of Sir Louis Mallet, England has lost one of the best of that reserve of almost the only aristocracy which is still effective in England, that aristocracy of knowledge, culture, and industry which stands behind the politicians, renders them sensible what cannot be done even to please a democracy without ultimately ruining it, and by the check which it keeps on Parliamentary wilfulness, and the service which it renders to Parliamentary strategy, minimises all the evils and brings out all the latent force of popular institutions. Even amongst this distinguished class of permanent Civil Servants, men like the late Sir James Stephen, the late

Herman Merivale, the late Sir Henry Maine, or the present Lord Thring, Sir Thomas Farrer, and Mr. Godley, Sir Louis Mallet was distinguished for a graciousness and refinement of manner which made him speak as one having authority and yet with all the ease and charm that render authority fascinating instead of fretting to those who recognise it. Even in England, bureaucrats seldom have the ease and polish of Sir Louis Mallet; and surely there is no bureaucracy in Europe so pleasant and free from the domineering manner as the English. Whether it be due to the necessity of subordinating their official doctrines to the exigencies of Parliamentary chiefs, or to something in the atmosphere of English life that discourages martinetism, there is certainly no class of departmental chiefs in Europe so little tinged with the repulsiveness of of strait-laced officialism as the English. And even amongst English departmental chiefs, Sir Louis Mallet was remarkable for the courtesy without blandness, the confidence without presumption, the knowledge of the world without worldliness, and the ease without easiness, which made all intercourse with him a pleasure and a refreshment.—*The Spectator*, Feb. 22, 1890.

The form of novelty most ready to hand in recent times has been in the increase of abstract words and phrases. This tendency was indulged by Dr. Johnson, and he certainly is more chargeable with excess in this than with the usual imputation of Latinism. Still, these two elements (namely, Latinism and an abstract phraseology) concur and coalesce, our phraseological and abstract expressions being mainly French and Latin. This kind of supply leans to the increase of verbiage, and it is fraught with a tendency to conventional diffuseness. Our public speaking has been injured by it; it renders the oratory of the House of Commons too often a dull concatenation of platitudes. I believe it is literally true, what I have seen asserted in the columns of journalism, that a large proportion of the speeches to which the House listens with placid satisfaction are quite unfit to appear in print before they have been freely condensed and amended by the reporters. When things have reached this pass, a reaction may be expected, and the signs of it may perhaps be discernible in some of our recent literature, though such things are not very easy of observation. There is no more trustworthy method of enquiry than that of looking at

prose of a former generation and estimating the relation it bears to our present tastes. Dr. Chalmers was a writer and preacher most enthusiastically admired, he was full of novelty in his manner of statement, a kind of novelty which hung almost entirely on the abstract; and the impression he now makes (for the most part) is that of a diffuse and tedious volubility. The corrective to excessive abstraction is a matter which will engage our attention presently.

All great writers attain novelty in some sense or other. Not all like Carlyle, by stuffing the page with everything that is strangest to prose and most forbidden; not all like Matthew Arnold, by a sententious rounding of his sections down to a recurrent apophthegm; some, and they are the most cunning artists, without visible means that can be exhibited by analysis, like Johnson or Macaulay, to the latter of whom Jeffrey put the query 'Where *did* you get that style from?' The more intangible and subtle the cause, the more the cause is merged and lost in the happy effect of freshness, the more excellent is the art or the genius of the writer.

A subtler form of novelty than word-coining is what may be called Word-Renewal. *Notum si callida verbum Reddiderit junctura novum.*[1] An old familiar word is renewed by a new combination. Every author (worthy the name) renews *some* words. It has been one of the most interesting features of the new vigour and independence of American literature, that it has often displayed in a surprizing manner what springs of novelty there are in reserve and to be elicited by novel combinations. We have often had to recognize this in the writings of Emerson, J. R. Lowell, and Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

It is naturally incident to a new view of any truth, that he who has won it should impart it with some freshness of language. So intimately are thought and speech linked to one another, that newness in the one is apt to beget by natural sympathy a like quality in the other. And therefore it might be thought that the element of diction should be left to the operation of instinct, and that it should not be tabulated or analyzed or systematized at all. But it is often useful to have

[1] Horace, *Ars Poetica.*

a little discourse of reason even about that which we are led to do by instinct. We naturally wish to ascertain whether instinct does or does not impel us to the right course. Many good authors have from excess of purism restrained and smothered their gifts. Indeed, English prose was rather under a puristic tyranny when Carlyle first broke out into Carlylese, and if apology were needed for the daring novelty of his diction, this consideration alone would suffice to vindicate him.

It is not easy to produce satisfactory examples of Novelty. Although it is quite certain that numerous instances have appeared at every stage and juncture in the development of our literature, yet the gloss of their novelty is of such a delicate and evanescent nature that when the time of their appearance is past, it is no longer easy to put the finger upon those traits which at the moment were recognized as new. For it is just these very features which are caught up and imitated, even instinctively and without the intent to imitate; and so they speedily fall into the category of common property. What we want therefore in such a case for the purposes of illustration is some recent prose full of vigour and freshness, into which an able man and if possible a poet, has thrown his whole heart. Such books do not come out every day; happily we have one at hand just now in Mr. John Skrine's hearty tribute to the memory of his old master. This is a book which has extorted admiration even from the honest critic who impeached it as 'highflying'; and it is perhaps this very fault (if fault it be) that renders it specially welcome to us at this crisis of our exposition. For here we recognize an example of prose diction which though full of warmth and ardour, is yet so perfectly under intellectual control, that it is never for one moment in danger of transgressing the charmèd frontier that divides Prose from Poetry.

§ 5. Of Figure.

Beyond all the sources of Novelty which have been touched upon hitherto there remains that which Prose shares with Poetry, the world of Figure. In this is to be found the most potent, the most prolific, and the most legitimate source of Novelty. There is a limit to verbal innovation (practically if

not theoretically), and a limit too which is soon reached; but the analogies of nature and of human life are absolutely inexhaustible.

Of that full-blown Figure which we call Simile little need be said; because this is rather an ornament superimposed on the discourse from rhetorical motives than a substantive ingredient in the diction. It is comparatively rare in prose; its proper field is Epic Poetry. I quote an example which is given in Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'Philosophy of Style.'

> The illusion, that great men and great events came oftener in early times than now, is partly due to historical perspective. As in a range of equidistant columns, the furthest off look the closest; so, the conspicuous objects of the past seem more thickly clustered the more remote they are.

Besides the expanded Simile, there are other and more rapid ways of enriching the discourse with this kind of imagery. For instance, in the middle of the following piece we see an undeveloped Simile:—

> He who has sought renown about the world and has reaped a full harvest of worldly favour will find, after all, that there is no love, no admiration, no applause, so sweet to the soul as that which springs up in his native place.
>
> It is there that he seeks to be gathered in peace and honour among his kindred and his early friends. And, when the weary heart and failing head begin to warn him that the evening of life is drawing on, he turns, as fondly as does the infant to the mother's arms, to sink to sleep in the bosom of the scene of his childhood.
>
> How would it have cheered the spirit of the youthful bard when, wandering forth in disgrace upon a doubtful world, he cast back a heavy look upon his paternal home, could he have foreseen that, before many years, he should return to it covered with renown; that his name should become the boast and glory of his native place; that his ashes should be religiously guarded as its most precious treasure; and that its lessening spire, on which his eyes were fixed in tearful contemplation, should one day become the beacon, towering amidst the gentle landscape, to guide the literary pilgrim of every nation to his tomb!—Washington Irving, *Sketch Book*, 'Stratford-on-Avon.'

Here is another:

Straight as an arrow to the mark His precepts pierce to the very depths of the soul and spirit.—F. W. Farrar, *The Life &c.* i. 271.

We see a cluster of such images, at the close of the following passage, which is taken from a sermon by Dr. Edwin Hatch entitled 'The Heavenly and Earthly Conflict':—

The battle is not waged so much at some supreme moments of mental struggle, when all the forces of our nature come into conscious play, but in the subtler form of the setting aside of plausible motives, and the struggling with apparently trivial sins. The two greatest of all recorded temptations turned upon actions which might at the moment have seemed insignificant: 'Eat this apple,' said the serpent; 'it is pleasant to the taste; it will do you no harm.' 'Turn these stones into loaves,' said the devil; 'you are very hungry, and you have but to say the word.' And yet upon these insignificant actions, upon the doing of the one and the not doing of the other, what awful issues hung! And to you and me, and it may be to others besides you and me, the temptation comes in no less subtle a form. 'Do this—it is very pleasant, and will do no real harm.' 'Do this—it is almost necessary, and the little wrong of it can soon be undone.' Sometimes we listen and sometimes we refuse: and all our lives long, day by day, and hour by hour, we alternate between victory and defeat, in a struggle which sometimes becomes a despair. For the path of holiness is not the calm ascent of a marble stairway: it is for all of us, for some no doubt more than others, a life-long journey over a rugged and sometimes uncertain road, a stumbling over many stones, a wandering into many a by-path, a fall into many a snare: and when heaven's gates open to us at last, they open to a tattered traveller with a worn and weary soul.

It is in the Sermon perhaps more than in any other form of literature that we may find specimens of the figured diction which is requisite to form the highest order of prose. The immortal prose of Greece and Rome grew out of the habit of public speaking, and the widest exercise of this function has come down to our time in the form of Christian oratory. Some of our political speakers have afforded splendid examples of eloquence, from Burke to Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone. The collected speeches of Mr. John Bright are a treasure of strong and well-governed eloquence. But political oratory is now for the most part exercised under conditions of pressure,

arising out of the overwhelming mass of detail, which exclude anything beyond a very ordinary level of conventional discourse. Only in the pulpit (and the study behind the pulpit) is there breathing time for the deliberate expansion of figurative illustration as in the following passages.

But has the plan of Jesus Christ been carried out? Does the kingdom of heaven exist on earth?

The Church of Christ is the living answer to that question. Boileau says somewhere that the Church is a great thought which every man ought to study. It would be more practical to say that the Church is a great fact which every man ought to measure. Probably we Christians are too familiarized with the blessed presence of the Church to do justice to her as a world-embracing institution, and as the nurse and guardian of our moral and mental life. Like the air we breathe, she bathes our whole being with influences which we do not analyse; and we hold her cheap in proportion to the magnitude of her secret services. The sun rises on us day by day in the heavens, and we heed not his surpassing beauty until our languid sense is roused by some observant astronomer or artist. The Christian Church pours even upon those of us who love her least floods of intellectual and moral light; and yet it is only by an occasional intellectual effort that we detach ourselves sufficiently from the tender monotony of her influences to understand how intrinsically extraordinary is the fact of her perpetual existence and her continuous expansion.—H. P. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures for* 1866; Lecture iii. p. 178.

But I understand you to point most emphatically to the spread and to the strength of modern rationalism. You say that rationalism is enthroned in the midst of civilizations which the Church herself has formed and nursed. You urge that rationalism, like the rottenness which has seized upon the heart of the forest oak, must sooner or later arrest the growth of branch and foliage, and bring the tree which it is destroying to the ground.—*Id.* p. 186.

It should be observed that there is a difference in the effect of Figure, according as we derive our imagery from nature or from art and technical learning. Out o' door figures from under the sun and the wind are better than figures that suggest the midnight lamp. In the following extract from a letter by King James I., 'stand by themselves like substantives' is pedantic.

. . . I look that by a peace they should enrich themselves to pay me my debts, and if they be so weak as they cannot subsist, either in peace or war, without I ruin myself for upholding them, in that case surely the nearest harm is to be first eschewed: a man will leap out of a burning ship and drown himself in the sea; and it is doubtless a farther off harm from me to suffer them to fall again into the hands of Spain, and let God provide for the danger that may with time fall upon me or my posterity, than presently to starve myself and mine with putting the meat in their mouth; nay rather, if they be so weak as they can neither sustain themselves in peace nor war, let them leave this vainglorious thirsting for the title of a free state, which no people are worthy of, or able to enjoy, that cannot stand by themselves like substantives, and . . . let their country be divided betwixt France and me, otherwise the King of Spain shall be sure to consume us, making us waste ourselves to sustain his enemies.—Quoted in Gardiner, *History*, 1603–1642, vol. ii. p. 25.

Perhaps it would be hypercriticism to find that the simile in the coming piece (from a schoolmaster's pen) is just a little too professional? If so the blame must rest with the book, whose quality has elevated the critic's standard to a pitch unreasonably high.

The interval which my last chapter represents, with almost the brevity of a symbol, was the interval of six years which separated my boyish from my later memories.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 95.

At the close of the next quotation a complete Picture is suddenly introduced; not only an outside movement but also its place or sphere of action; there is an entire transition and shifting of scene; it is a new and whimsical picture, different from the subject of discourse, but analogous.

He conceived of his duties with his wonted comprehensiveness and magnanimity. Here was come to his hands a leverage, by which he might raise the whole social life of his neighbours. Nothing less could be aimed at. Music, literature, art, gymnastics, horticulture, cuisine, amusement, should all take service under him, and he would organize the social well-being of townspeople, as he had already organized it for school-boys. This sounds grand language;—but that is because the operations were within the compass of a petty market town, of not three thousand souls, and you cannot

get up a high tide in a saucer.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 198.

This is a manœuvre to which the somewhat vague term of Trope may most conveniently be appropriated.

But all such explicit imagery belongs to the rhetorical purpose of the immediate occasion, and is not of the nature of that renovation of diction after which we are now more particularly seeking. It is by Metaphor that such renovation is attained. Although Metaphor is akin to such imagery, and contains a suggestion of it, yet the manner of its action is so different as to place it in another category. Metaphor is a Figure of speech, whereby the word which properly belongs to one set of phenomena is transferred to another, not arbitrarily, but in accordance with some natural and obvious analogy. And it is this manifest accordance with nature which gives it truth and harmony, and acceptance.

Similes and pictured images are sought out for the sake of ornament, but Metaphor is a resource of expression that starts up instinctively by affinity with the process of sincere meditation. It rises as a light to the mind of the thinker, and not merely as a reflector by which he may throw his light upon other minds. It is indeed eminently illuminating, and especially so to the unsophisticated reader; but it draws that virtue and force from the fact that it has illumined the mind of the writer first. It has been observed by Archbishop Whately, that in adapting your style to the comprehension of the illiterate, Metaphor is, in many cases, the clearest mode of expression that can be employed; it being usually much easier for uncultivated minds to comprehend a similitude or analogy than an abstract term.

> And hence (he continues) the language of savages, as has often been remarked, is highly metaphorical; and such appears to have been the case with all languages in their earlier, and consequently ruder and more savage state; all terms relating to the mind and its operations, being, as appears from the etymology of most of them, originally metaphorical; though by long use they have ceased to be so: e.g. the words 'ponder,' 'deliberate,' 'reflect,' and many other such, are evidently drawn by analogy from external sensible bodily actions.—*Elements of Rhetoric* Part III. chap. i. § 2.

We observed above, when treating of the Simile, that it should be drawn from the world of nature in preference to the artificial world of learning or of science. But there are exceptions to this general rule. The most artificial simulations of knowledge, methods and systems which have been cast away as unscientific, enjoy a privilege in this respect which is hardly inferior to that of nature herself. Figures taken from alchemy or astrology are never felt to be pedantic. It is as if their rejection by the world of science had caused them to escheat to the realm of imagination and to the romantic world, which is as good a source of figure as the realm of nature. Here is an astrological metaphor:

The school could not be built up without the creation of vested interests, and of hampering obligations to the subordinate builders. All honour to the man who risked money at his side in the outset, trusting his star.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 137.

Figures from these romantic sciences may sometimes appear recondite, but they would never, I think, be called pedantic. Carlyle somewhere in *Sartor Resartus* ascribed to the buoyancy of a glad heart the power of 'brightening London smoke itself into gold vapour, as from the crucible of an alchemist.'

Something of this favouring glamour attends figures which are taken from the very real science of Astronomy, although they are now rather dulled by familiarity. The most familiar are those of 'zenith' and 'nadir,' as when Hallam said of King Eadgar that under him the West-Saxon power attained its zenith of prosperity; and the same historian in another place said: 'The seventh century is the nadir of the human mind in Europe.'

To this learned or scientific and yet romantic group, we may perhaps add Mythology:

And in the expression of these doubts we can shelter ourselves under the ægis of illustrious names.—*The Church Quarterly Review*, April 1890; 'Bishop Lightfoot on the New Testament in the Second Century.'

But, as a rule, the most familiar aspects of nature, and the most ordinary pursuits or callings of men, offer the best

material to draw figures from. Here is one from the trade of the corn-dealer.

There was a uniformity of soundness among his results, a strict correspondence, so to say, between bulk and sample, not elsewhere, as I think, to be met with, where the scale was the same.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 236.

So common and ubiquitous is Metaphor, that we are constantly using words as if they were proper to their subject, which, if we only examine them, we shall find to have been transferred. All things relating to the troubles and anxieties of life are expressed by words of this nature. Thus 'affliction' is derived from the figure of dashing against a rock; 'anxiety' is based on the figure of choking or strangling; 'grief' is from the figure of a burden heavy to bear; 'trouble' from the disorderly pressure of a crowd; 'tribulation' from the figure of thrashing out corn with the sledge or thrashing-machine of the ancients; and if we knew the history of 'care' and 'woe' (which we do not) we should surely find they have derived their sense from some analogy in physical things.

If, from the vocabulary of mental operations and feelings, we turn to the words that concern money-matters, we find that 'generous' and 'liberal' are figurative and refer to the birth-condition of those who have an easy way of using their money;—'stingy' is based on the figure of a waspish fretfulness; 'sordid' is based on the figure of a house unswept, clothes unbrushed, everything neglected and dusty; 'miser' on the figure of wretched living. And nothing forbids that words, when they have reached an upper stage of abstraction, should still go on to stand again and serve as figures to some idea which is in search of illustration. Thus 'bounty' is from a figure, not physical, but moral; the figure of goodness.

In the next quotation 'spaciousness,' though abstract, retains enough of its elemental sense to be able to invest a finer and subtler thought with something of ethereal solidity.

No advice like his. Yet it was not always of the kind which askers like. It was, for that purpose, one might say, too oracular, though in the best manner of the Delphian response and without its ambiguity. It had the oracle's depth of tone, aloofness from

concrete fact, and the spaciousness which fits hexameter verse.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 86.

Of other words associated with money we may observe that 'fund' has reference to a farm, and 'budget' to a box. It is an anglicized form of the French *bougette*, which is thus explained by Cotgrave:

A little coffer, or trunk of wood, covered with leather, wherewith the women of old time carried their iewels, attires, and trinkets at their saddle bowes, when they rid into the countrey; now gentlemen call so, both any such trunke; and the box, or till of their Cabinets wherein they keepe their money; also, a little male, pouch, or budget.

Since the close of the last century this word is almost appropriated to signify the financial statement which the Chancellor of the Exchequer makes annually in Parliament with his plan of taxation for the ensuing year;—almost, but not quite, for we can still speak of a budget of news. The radical figure is the same in both uses; it is that of a box of papers, a despatch-box.

In the Simile, the analogy is stated, perhaps unfolded, at least asserted, as in the examples given above, or as in this:

This mid-August holiday, or Old Boys' match, was the high feast of cricket. All day you played cricket, or else lounged round the game, meeting old friends, and patronizing youngsters. At night there was a mighty supper, laid all the length of the big schoolroom. There were cricket speeches, and cricket jokes, not as first-rate as the cricket, but they served. *O dura messorum ilia!* But then there was also a speech from the head of the table. It was like the sound of a church bell over the rustic music of a fair. —J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 89.

But in the Metaphor it is taken for granted. Archbishop Whately said, that 'all men are more gratified in catching the resemblance for themselves, than in having it pointed out to them.' The next quotation offers an example in

safety-valve.

This was indeed a moment of peril. It was the only time during my political life in which I have felt uneasy as to the result.

Fortunately, in this, as in other cases, the House of Commons proved the safety-valve of Society.—Earl Russell, *Recollections &c.* (1875) c. 1.

It is part of the habit of the observant mind to form comparisons, to illustrate things in one department of experience by things in another department; and this habit is the basis of a tacit understanding upon which men transact their mental communications. There is nothing that is more calculated to make the reader feel himself in touch with his author than when some apt metaphor awakens his sympathy. It makes the intelligent reader feel that the process of thought is rather shared with the author than received from him.

It was through the delight he had in tracing this universal web of analogy, which runs through language as it runs through nature, that the man of rich poetic mind, who produced an elevating treatise on the Parables, became also an ardent philologer, and the prime mover in a gigantic effort which is now conferring upon the English Language the most complete Dictionary that has appeared in this age of Dictionaries. The exactitude which has been attained by phonetic analysis will probably enable us to recover in some instances the traces of forgotten analogies, but it can add little to our already well-grounded assurance of the ubiquity of metaphor in the elementary composition of language. And this consideration suggests a caution about the present tendency of Etymologists to find a base of operations in that system of Roots which is associated with the name of Fick, and which has been largely accepted by Professor Skeat and embodied in his *Etymological Dictionary*. The authorities who are responsible for the New Oxford Dictionary have done wisely and prudently in refraining from this speculative ambition.

The prose writer cannot openly profess to lead his reader through a gallery of pictures as the poet rightly may; his similes must be rare, and with his metaphors he must not be prodigal. But there is such a thing as lighting up the context by intimations so slight that the reader almost thinks the picturesqueness originated in his own creative mind. The following extract offers more than one illustration of this

prolific source, but there is, in particular, one to which I will call attention ;—it is the epithet 'derelict.' What an air of loneliness and desertion does it not import, and yet the author cannot be accused of poetry, although he has flashed upon his reader's mind the desolate thought of a ship deserted at sea, or a farm deserted in Ireland.

'The town of Uppingham,' says an old writer with injurious brevity, 'consisteth of one meane streete.' It consisted of no more when my schoolfellow and myself set out to warm our frozen toes on the kidney stones of its inhospitable pavement. But it had recovered in the last half decade from the dishevelment of a country town in decay, from the broken glass and notice-boards of derelict houses ; for there was new blood in the old veins again.—*A Memory of Edward Thring*, By J. H. Skrine, Warden of Glenalmond, p. 7.

A cultivated mind in sympathy with its subject will naturally incline to figured language, as that which is most akin to pleasurable contemplation. Figured thought is the common smile of nature and of speech. It is the smile of recognition between those who ought to be acquainted, those who are of one kindred. A new figure is the discovery of a delightful family secret. Did not a smile break forth over the face of him who first thought of a happy state of mind as 'light' or 'sunshine,' who first saw the analogies of human vicissitude with that which in nature is 'calm' or 'wild' or 'rough'? Such rare and happy moments are like angels' visits, and bring with them an exhilarating taste as of almost creative power or of reading the counsel of God. Hence the mystic joy the reader feels at a figurative touch which seems to put him in contact with a radiant mind and a sound heart. It is the natural union of wisdom and joy : —'I was with him, arranging everything, and I was delighted every day, rejoicing before him all the time ; sporting in the expanse of his world, and my delight was with the sons of men.'[1]

In treating of Figure we find ourselves at that part of our subject where the distinction between Prose and Poetry is least enforceable. It is as if we were regarding that original and elementary stage of literature where Prose and Poetry

[1] Proverbs viii. 30. See it in the Vulgate.

were not yet distinguished from each other. In the usage of Simile we observe a practical distinction between the habits of the two, but in Metaphor the distinction, though not absent, is often inconspicuous. In Metaphor we are in that primal element out of which speech itself was very largely made, and the creative power of analogic thought continues still in activity not less potent, although it is less observed only because more widely distributed. Metaphor is common to Poetry and Prose, because it is the prime agent of progressive thought growing by experience and the comparison of experiences, a process from which is derived the nutriment of all literature and of all science.

But while we fully recognize the community of this powerful element pervading both forms of literature, we must not on that account drift into an idea that the distinction is an unreal or unimportant one. The distinction between Prose and Poetry is not merely a formal or superficial one, it is very real, profound, and essential. What if all the ingredients and constituent parts of the one reappear in full catalogue in the other? That is no disproof of a generic difference between the two organisms. To suppose this would be to forget the architectonic power of nature which manifests itself in animal framework, as if to give us a lesson what transformations we ought to look for in the world of mind. Nothing is commoner than to see two mammalia which are built up of parts almost indistinguishably alike to the general eye, and yet when compacted as living wholes they are two distinct animals differing in genus by a difference which the passing spectator cannot ignore. In a variety of ways by writers of various quality and purpose, sometimes by mere random carelessness, sometimes with ingenuity and design, we have seen prose invading poetry and poetry absorbing the domain of prose, but such things always demonstrate themselves to be abnormal by the reaction they entail and the warning they bequeath.

The line of watershed between Poetry and Prose is a narrow edge, ticklish for the foot of travellers who like travelling along the crests. And herein lies a reason why the prose writer should make himself familiar with the poets. He should know poetry, not merely so that images should be

ready and familiar, but so that he may be able to gaze at the brilliance with undazzled eye. Poets, or men of poetic tastes, know how to reconcile much of the best spirit of poetry with the full sobriety of prose. And hence the truth there is in the admiring phrase—'poets' prose.'

Many distinguished prose authors have been poets, more have had the ambition of poetry, and probably nearly all have been men of poetical studies. They have sometimes been poets without the name, and sometimes, like Cicero, they may have had the repute of bad poets. This judgment about Cicero was lightly formed and is lightly bandied about. When a serious scholar touches the point, we hear a different story. The Professor of Latin at Oxford, after quoting a few samples of Cicero's criticism on old Latin poets, added these words :—'It is much to be wished that we had more of this kind from the hand of a man of genius, who was a considerable metrist himself, and only fell short of being a poet.'[1]

The best of Prose is often 'poets' prose,' because the poet's mind is stored with good choice of figures, and has also a disciplined habit in the use of them. Through discipline, a poet can venture nearer than other men to poetry without being drawn away from the sphere of prose; as may be observed in the following passage with its poetic touch of personification unreproved.

But he is harking back to *carerent* when a clock strikes, and a stern 'You may go,' judicially and massively spoken like a sentence of acquittal, empties the room. Whew! to breathe the blessed air again! *O refrigerium.* Purgatory over for a week! The very gravel of the quad smiles underfoot, the green ivy laughs on the wall. What matters it to us that to-morrow is Black Friday with its crowded school hours and much Euclid? What matters anything at all? We have been up to Teddy—and here we are!—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, ch. 1.

One of the richer sources of Figure is the attribution of human qualities to objects which are naturally devoid of them. Sometimes it hardly amounts to what we should call Personification, it is merely a tinge of anthropomorphism. For

[1] *The Journal of Philology*, Vol. xviii. No. 36: 'Literary Criticism in Latin Antiquity,' p. 237.

example, things are sometimes described as 'conspiring' to produce events, as in the following extract from a review of Mr. Freeman's series of 'Historic Towns.' Of the Cinque Ports (which had found a historian in Professor Montagu Burrows) it is there said:

But in the apparent height of their power and prosperity the progress of decay had already begun, and once begun it was rapid. Floods, sieges, and sacks all contributed to it, but it was chiefly due to the course of physical change, conspiring with the increase in the burthen of vessels.—*The Times*, March 29, 1890.

Here we may incidentally notice a certain grammatical unevenness that sometimes waits upon the use of Personification in the English language. Personification is apt to draw after it the notion of gender, and our language has very nearly divested itself of the means of arraying this ancient grammatical notion in a presentable manner. Our phrases and our thoughts on this subject are in an unsettled state of transition. A Figure that involves gender rarely runs on all fours. When we personify an abstract quality we at once suppose it to be feminine, but it sometimes happens that the name for that particular abstraction may wear a masculine countenance, and the combination of a masculine noun with a feminine pronoun is incongruous. Hence we may observe a vacillation in usage.

The genius of Babylon had received a deadly wound—he drooped for a while and died.—Arnold's *Sermons on Prophecy*, p. 40. Quoted by Dean Stanley in *The Jewish Church*, Vol. iii. p. 67.

At any rate, my brethren, genius herself has not been slow to confess the rarity and the difficulty of a real originality.—H. P. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures for* 1866, Lecture iii. p. 163.

So our imagination did not make an abstraction and personify the school as a genius, immortal and feminine. Its genius was something mortal, and wholly masculine, and beside him there was no room as yet for an Alma Mater.—J. H. Skrine, *A Memory of Edward Thring*, p. 85.

We may set before our eyes the usage of Figure in prose, and the limits imposed upon that usage, by observing instances of misjudgment or excess. There is a just relation between

usage and motive. The proper motive of Figure in prose is illustration of the subject, not ornament of the discourse. Wherever it appears to be superfluous, it is liable to appear ridiculous. For instance, the general reader does not want to be told that the money market is apt to move with political movements; indeed it is often spoken of in terms that suggest the sensitiveness of the barometer; and therefore the political writer who, to minimize the importance of Prince Bismarck's resignation, exclaimed, 'the aspen leaves of the Bourse have scarcely been observed to quiver,' did nothing by this figure to earn a reader's admiration or gratitude;—more likely provoked him to murmur 'pshaw.'

It belongs to the office of poetry to adorn old familiar things by new aspects and analogies; poetry shares this office with the art which in this particular is analogous to it, the art of painting. Such ornaments are pleasing to the fancy or the imagination; and poetry is true to its office when it seeks to furnish this pleasure. But the office of prose is to communicate ideas rather than adorn them; to inform, enlighten, persuade;—and to such aims the use of Figure should in prose be carefully subordinated.

There was a time when writers freely intersprinkled their prose with the flowers of poesy, and so obtained for it an aspect of sprightliness and vivacity at a cheap rate. This is now very much less usual than it was, let us say, thirty or forty years ago, when any scrap of Shakspeare that at all coincided with the meaning was allowed to bedizen the discourse, and to do duty instead of the writer's own words. This kind of shoddy is now rarely seen except in the precocious efforts of some aspiring author in a provincial newspaper. All the more is room made and respect secured for an occasional quotation that may illumine the subject with a flash of light, as only a poetic touch can do. The following example illustrates this:

The most striking and, from our point of view, the most unfortunate characteristic of Persia is her impotence actively to control her own destiny. When the most has been made of the improvement effected by her present ruler, it remains but too evident that

the difficulties in the way of a really effective reorganization of her resources and assertion of her independence are of a kind that may well be regarded as insuperable. Though possessing many admirable qualities, and even retaining some valuable military aptitudes, the Persians seem nearly destitute of that indefinable national spirit which alone can give unity and coherence. Why that spirit now manifests itself with a vigour that makes a people irresistible and again becomes utterly extinguished is a problem which no philosophy of history has satisfactorily solved. Race, institutions, soil, climate, resources, religion, customs, all may remain unchanged, yet the soul that compacted all these elements into a conquering and progressive people may die out of the land and leave it the easy prey of every marauder. 'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more,' was Byron's despairing summary of the decadence he deplored, but could not explain, and Persia has passed through the same mysterious, but mortal, change.—*The Times*, March 15, 1890.

On this subject of the relations of Prose and Poetry, all authors do not speak alike. I have in the previous chapter noticed some important opinions which do not coincide with my own. In this place I shall have the pleasure of quoting (after Dr. Whately) what I take to be a sound and admirable illustration from the pen of Adam Smith (fragment of an *Essay on the Imitative Arts*) :—

Were I to attempt to discriminate between Dancing and any other kind of movement, I should observe, that though in performing any ordinary action,—in walking, for example, across the room, a person may manifest both grace and agility, yet if he betrays the least intention of showing either, he is sure of offending more or less, and we never fail to accuse him of some degree of vanity and affectation. In the performance of any such ordinary action, every one wishes to appear to be solely occupied about the proper purpose of the action; if he means to show either grace or agility, he is careful to conceal that meaning; and in proportion as he betrays it, which he almost always does, he offends. In Dancing, on the contrary, every one professes and avows, as it were, the intention of displaying some degree either of grace or of agility, or of both. The display of one or other, or both of these qualities, is, in reality, the proper purpose of the action; and there can never be any disagreeable vanity or affectation in following out the proper purpose of any action. When we say of any particular person, that he gives himself many affected airs and graces in Dancing, we mean either that

he exhibits airs and graces unsuitable to the nature of the Dance, or that he exaggerates those which are suitable. Every Dance is, in reality, a succession of airs and graces of some kind or other, which, if I may say so, profess themselves to be such. The steps, gestures, and motions which, as it were, avow the intention of exhibiting a succession of such airs and graces, are the steps, gestures, and motions which are peculiar to Dancing. The distinction between the sounds or tones of Singing and those of Speaking, seems to be of the same kind with that between the steps, etc., of Dancing and those of any other ordinary action. Though in Speaking a person may show a very agreeable tone of voice, yet if he seems to *intend* to show it,—if he appears to listen to the sound of his own voice, and as it were to tune it into a pleasing modulation, he never fails to offend, as guilty of a most disagreeable affectation. In Speaking, as in every other ordinary action, we expect and require that the speaker should attend only to the proper purpose of the action,—the clear and distinct expression of what he has to say. In Singing, on the contrary, every one professes the intention to please by the tone and cadence of his voice; and he not only appears to be guilty of no disagreeable affectation in doing so, but we expect and require that he should do so. To please by the Choice and Arrangement of agreeable sounds, is the proper purpose of all music, vocal as well as instrumental; and we always expect that every one should attend to the proper purpose of whatever action he is performing. A person may appear to sing, as well as to dance, affectedly; he may endeavour to please by sounds and tones which are unsuitable to the nature of the song, or he may dwell too much on those which are suitable to it. The disagreeable affectation appears to consist always, not in attempting to please by a proper, but by some improper modulation of the voice.

In this fine passage the relations between walking and dancing are ranged in equal analogy with the relations between speaking and singing; and to these two pairs of ratios it will be easy for us to add a third. That Poetry has the same relation to Prose as Dancing to Walking, and Singing to Speaking, is (as Whately has observed) what seems evidently to have been in the author's mind, though the dissertation is left unfinished.[1]

We have cast this glance back upon Poetry, because it is

[1] *The Elements of Rhetoric*, by Richard Whately, D.D.; Part III. ch. iii. § 4.

Poetry that contributes most largely towards the elements required for the renovation of prose. But much as we have made of the valuable service of Figure, we must still remember that novelty is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. If a writer goes out in quest of ornament and striking illustrations, he may attain to Fine Writing, he may make his discourse brilliant and splendid as a piece of new embroidery, but he will never write well; he will never attain to that maturity and weight of expression which constitutes what is called a Style. Here I will introduce three sentences transferred from a different context, trusting the reader to welcome them in this place.

> But a name is one thing, and the vivid complete grasp of an idea is another. You are accustomed to distinguish with some wholesome severity between originality of phrase and originality of thought. You observe that an intrinsic poverty of thought may at times succeed in formulating an original expression; while a true originality will often, nay generally, welcome a time-honoured and conventional phraseology if it can thus secure currency and acceptance for the truth which it has brought to light.—H. P. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures* for 1866, Lecture iii. p. 169.

Self-restraint is often expedient, and without some exercise of it, the best work cannot be produced. Still the great fact remains that freshness and originality of thought has a strong affinity with novelty of diction, and more particularly it gives an impulse to the discovery of Figure.

Of Figure at large it may, upon the broadest and most general view, be said, that it is naturally attendant upon fresh and original thought. The book which of all books in the world is the most original, is that which in its form is most characterized by the use of Figure. This book is the one which has aroused the greatest diversity of opinion, insomuch that there are very few statements that can be formulated about it which will pass universally unchallenged. But there is one proposition upon which the pious Catholic can reach out the hand to the most irreverent sceptic, namely this: that the Gospel narrative manifests the greatest originality of any book in the world. This is a proposition on

which Strauss and Renan might clasp hands with Dr. Liddon. And I think one need not be afraid to assert that of all the prose writings in existence it is the most figured. For it is

full of the common images of daily life. There is scarcely a scene or object familiar to the Galilee of that day, which Jesus did not use as a moral illustration of some glorious promise or moral law. He spoke of green fields, and springing flowers, and the budding of the vernal trees; of the red or lowering sky; of sunrise and sunset; of wind and rain; of night and storm; of clouds and lightning; of stream and river; of stars and lamps; of honey and salt; of quivering bulrushes and burning weeds; of rent garments and bursting wine-skins; of eggs and serpents; of pearls and pieces of money; of nets and fish. Wine and wheat, corn and oil, stewards and gardeners, labourers and employers, kings and shepherds, travellers and fathers of families, courtiers in soft clothing and brides in nuptial robes—all these are found in His discourses.—F. W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ*, i. p. 271.

The figures in the Gospel discourses are not figures of decoration, but of illustration; they are not figures used to adorn a tale poetically, but in the didactic spirit of prose. Thus we touch again upon the natural distinction between poetry and prose, a subject which has a perennial interest, whenever anything calls us to dwell upon it for a moment.

It is an old and oft-repeated observation that religious themes can best be treated in prose, and that few have been successful who have handled them in poetry. Dr. Johnson accepted it as an acknowledged fact, and he undertook to shew that in the nature of things it must be so. His position has been disputed, and after the universally acceptable hymnody of Charles Wesley, Lyte, Heber, James Montgomery, John Keble, and others, it may be more difficult to justify the exclusion which he upheld; but nevertheless, there certainly remains a substantial truth in his contention, from which I will quote a short paragraph.

Of sentiments purely religious, it will be found that the most simple expression is the most sublime. Poetry loses its lustre and its power, because it is applied to the decoration of something more excellent than itself. All that pious verse can do is to help the memory, and delight the ear, and for these purposes it may be very

useful; but it supplies nothing to the mind. The ideas of Christian theology are too simple for eloquence, too sacred for fiction, and too majestic for ornament; to recommend them by tropes and figures, is to magnify by a concave mirror the sidereal hemisphere.—*Life of Waller.*

And now we must leave it to the judgment and taste of the reader to make any further reflections upon this attractive theme.

CHAPTER VII

OF IDIOM

The nature of Idiom. Antagonism between Grammar and Idiom. The historical basis of Idiom—Relative idiomatic conditions of French, English, and German. Some of our native English idioms. The double Genitive—The English Noun-phrase—Singular verb to plural subject. Flat Adverbs—'The two first' or 'the first two'? 'Anglicism.' Kelticism. Gallicism—Early examples—Romanesque Relative—Imperfect Assimilation. The Definite Article—Felicity of French Phrases. Some minor examples. Instance of confused idiom. Latinism—Hooker, Clarendon—Mr. Walter Pater. Hebraism. Grecism—John Locke. Germanism—Periodic Structure—Perfect Tense for Preterite—Compounds. New Adjectives. Sprinklings of foreign words, Latin, French, Italian. Example from Mr. M. Arnold. Provincialism. Slang—Examples from J. R. Lowell. Americanisms—Examples from Mr. Bryce and Mr. H. Ward Beecher. The beauty of native Idiom.

But when writers, whose rank in literature is high enough to carry with it some responsibility for the trusteeship of their native language, do not scruple to adulterate its vocabulary, and distort its structure by the copious employment of all sorts of Gallicisms, Germanisms, and Americanisms, it is surely high time for the Universities to exert with energy all the influence and authority they can command for the preservation of what is national and classical in the genius of English Literature.—The Earl of Lytton; quoted in *Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1887, p. 256.

IDIOM imparts a local tint—if that is not too hard and materialistic a phrase—it adds a something which is too subtle for analysis and description. Idiom is a thing that can be felt and not described. While however it is difficult to say what Idiom exactly is and wherein it consists when we are speaking of it in the abstract, the same difficulty does not attach to the concrete—we can bring Idioms within the cognizance of our senses and we shall find it practicable to describe an Idiom.

An Idiom (Greek word for peculiarity) is a form of speech, which is not common to all languages, but peculiar to some one language. The 'idioms' of a language are those forms

of expression which cannot be translated, word for word, into other languages. They may be rendered by some equivalent phrase, but not word for word. The English expression 'you are right,' cannot be rendered word for word into good French, German, or Latin. In French it would become *Vous avez raison*; in German, *Sie haben recht*; in Latin, *Recte dicis*. It would be un-English to say 'you have reason,' or 'you have right,' or 'you speak rightly'; it is according to English idiom to say 'you are right.'

When any peculiarity of a language or of a dialect is characterized as an idiom, a comparison is implied. If we call a phrase peculiar we must have in our mind some standard of what is regular and typical. That standard may either be the prevalent fashion of the day, or it may be a philosophical standard, namely the general analogy of language. This latter standard is not so uncommon as might be supposed. Educated men, who know something of two or three languages, Latin, Greek, French &c., have some such a standard in their minds, however vaguely outlined. It is mainly the Latin that determines the standard in such cases, because this has been the first grammatical study, and because with most men the bulk of the reading of a lifetime has been in diction of a Latin tincture.

Idiom is continually invaded and preyed upon by Grammar, for Grammar is the natural enemy of Idiom. And here we must remember in what sense we agreed to use the term Grammar. In one way of speaking, Grammar is but a neutral agency, with no mind or purpose of its own, being merely concerned to register the habits and usage of any language. Grammar in this sense cannot be said to be favourable or unfavourable to anything, for it is absolutely indifferent. This is an inferior sense of the term Grammar.

But according to the sense in which we agreed to speak of Grammar, it is a harmonizing faculty between thought and language, a faculty which promotes regularity and logical order in the economy of language. Such a faculty operates by general rules or principles, and is free from partiality to the local usages of any particular language. This faculty is of a progressive and reforming nature, as on the other hand it is the

nature of Idiom to be conservative and stationary. This faculty of universal Grammar has been for centuries very widely fostered among European nations by the common study of Latin, as well as by the mutual study of each other's languages, and this faculty it is which is gradually but powerfully approximating the modern languages to one another in respect of phraseology and syntax. Moreover this faculty of Grammar is guided not only by certain leading types of language or by a logic which has been elicited from such types, but, over and above this, by a love of order, system, and concinnity within the domestic economy of each particular language. It produces a critical sense of judgment by admiration of analogy or symmetry between thought and expression. The operation of this faculty is retarded in its levelling process by those inherited formulæ which are very stubborn and tenacious, and which, as being unconformable to the generalizations of this larger-minded Grammar, are called Idioms.

Two movements are always at work in every language. On the one side the domestic growth of speech follows the bent of the national idiosyncracies and is moulded after their pattern. This is the source of Idiom, which draws its essence from every mental peculiarity of race or nation. On the other side every foreign and every philosophical influence tends to reduce Idiom, and to bring about a general conformity in the relations of thought with speech. At this moment the three foremost languages have their distinct and well-marked characteristics in this respect. Of the three, French is the most and German the least idiomatic. This corresponds to the fact that of the three French has been least and German has been most agitated by foreign and philosophical influence. This is the cause why of the three languages French is the least able to adapt itself in translating from other languages, as on the other hand German enjoys a supremacy in its power of adaptation to foreign originals. For the purposes of this present consideration English holds a middle place; for although our Idiom may have received in sum total as many shocks as German, the disturbances have come to us one by one over a larger tract of time.

If we proceed then to enquire into the idioms which are

incidental to the English language, we must ask what standards have arisen to give occasion for such comparisons. The study of our idioms must rest on an enquiry into the successive phases through which we have passed in the literary history of our language. There will still be idioms in the background, which are too old to be elucidated by such an enquiry; but this process will give enough to display the general bearings of the subject.

The dialectal history of English falls into three well-distinguished periods, the same three periods as we had to deal with in treating of the Choice of Expression and which we there found it convenient to name the Saxon, the Romanic, and the Latin periods.

In the Saxon period our attention is demanded by the geographical area, of which there were three main linguistic divisions, namely, the South, the Midland, and the North. The Anglo-Saxon literature is in the dialect of the South, that is of Wessex. Modern English Literature is in a composite language in which the vernacular element is made up of the two dialects of the South and of the Midland, but still without the loss of the old prerogative of the South. This threefold division of English is recognized in the fourteenth century by Trevisa in a passage to be quoted below. The Northern dialect has been divided into two parts by the long political separation of the Lothians from England. The original area of the Northern dialect stretched from the Humber to the Forth. The part which is to the north of the Tweed was separated and produced a national language, the Scottish. The other half of that area has with the rest of England come to reckon as merely provincial over against the standard English. This historical outline is the first key to a right understanding of the present condition of English dialects. Other local keys are requisite. On the east coast we have to consider the Denish settlements; in Devon and Cornwall the lingering influence of the British language; and a like influence all along the Welsh border. In North Lancashire and Cumberland we have to take account of Norwegian settlements all along the coast. These are the elements of the first group of

our idioms, those namely which are insular and vernacular. This field of language may seem past and worn out, and it may be thought to retain none but a philological interest. But in the present hunger of the literary English for the restitution of native material, a young writer who had ranged through English dialects not merely in books, but in living wayside intercourse, might import some good old turns of speech that would adorn his diction and shine like new. Sometimes a native English idiom receives countenance from that kindred language which has recently become a school subject, I mean the German.

The Romanesque influence was dominant from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, and then it only gradually yielded to the ascendency of that Latin influence which had all along been present with it. These two dialectal influences are at first much intermixed, and yet they can generally with more or less certainty be discriminated. In and after the sixteenth century the supremacy of the Latin is undisturbed.

By way of illustrating these three eras we may cite a familiar example. The question is sometimes asked, Which is right, to say 'It is I' or to say 'It is me'? Both formulæ are in use, but the latter is homely and familiar; the former alone is used in what is called correct writing. It is perhaps not so generally known as it ought to be that there is a third formula, one which is older than either of these, and which is in fact the native English formula. Readers of Chaucer are acquainted with his phrase 'I am it,' which is pure English idiom, and which though obsolete with us, is still fully alive in the German 'ich bin es.' The other two are respectively the Roman and the Latin. When we say 'It is me' we do but translate 'c'est moi'; and as for 'It is I,' though not verbally Latin, yet it is the outcome of the Latin grammatical doctrine that the verb *to be* takes the same case after it as before it. This is a plain instance of that invasion of Idiom by Grammar which has been spoken of above.

Again, we may stamp a several character upon each of the three eras by the following marks. From the first era we retain the Saxon Genitive in *-s*, from the second we have the French genitival phrase with *of*; while the Latin era has taught us the

doctrine that two Negatives cancel one another, and are equivalent to an Affirmative.

This will be the most convenient place to produce two interesting testimonies of the dialectal history of our language, one from the fourteenth and the other from the sixteenth century.

1387.

As hyt ys yknowe hou3 meny people buth in this ylonde, ther buth also of so meny people longages and tonges, notheles Walschemen and Scottes that buth no3t ymelled with othere nacions holdeth wel ny3 her furste longage and speche. Bote 3et Scottes, that wer some tyme confederat and wonede with the Pictes, drawe somwhat after here speche. Bote the Flemynges that woneth in the west syde of Wales habbeth yleft here straunge speche and speketh Saxonlych ynow. Also Englysche men they3 hy hadde fram the bygynnynge thre maner speche, Southeron, Northeron, and Myddel speche (in the myddel of the lond) as hy come of thre maner people of Germania; notheles, by commyxstion and mellynge furst with Danes and afterward with Normans, in menye the contray longage ys apeyred, and som useth strange wlaffynge, chyterynge, harrynge and garrynge and grisbitinge. This apeyryng of the burthe-tonge ys bycause of twey thinges,—on ys for chyldren in scoles a3enes the usage and manere of al othere nacions buth compelled for to leve her oune longage, and for to construe here lessons and here thingis a Freynsch and habbeth suththe the Normans come furst into Engelond. Also gentilmen children buth ytau3t for to speke Freynsch fram tyme that a buth yrokked in here cradel, and conneth speke and pleye with a child hys brouch; and uplondysche men wol lykne hamsylf to gentile men and fondeth with gret bysynes for to speke Freynsch for to be more ytold of.

Thys manere was moche y-used tofore the furst moreyn and ys seththe somdel ychaunged, for John Cornwal, a maystere of gramere, chaungede the lore in gramere scole and construccion of Freynsch into Englysch; and Richard Pencryche lurnede that manere techynge of hym, and othere men of Pencryche; so that the 3er of oure Lord, a thousand thre hondred, four score and fyve of the secunde kyng Richard after the conquest nyne, in al the gramere scoles of Engelond children leueth Freynsch and construeth and lurneth an Englysch, and habbeth ther-by avauntage in on syde and desavauntage yn another; here avauntage ys that a lurneth here gramere yn lasse tyme than childern were ywoned to do—dis-

avauntage ys that now children of gramere scole conneth no more Frensch than can here lift heele, and that ys harm for ham, and a scholle passe the se and travayle in strange londes, and in meny caas also. Also gentil men habbeth now moche yleft for to teache here childern Freynsch.—Higden, *Polychronicon*, I. cap. 59. Trevisa.

1589.

This part in our maker or Poet must be heedyly looked vnto, that it be naturall, pure, and the most usuall of all his countrey: and for the same purpose rather that which is spoken in the King's Court, or in the good townes and cities within the land, then in the marches and frontiers, or in port townes, where straungers haunt for traffike sake, or yet in the Universities where Schollers use much peevish affectation of words out of the primative languages, or finally, in any uplandish village or corner of a realme, where is no resort but of poore rusticall or uncivill people: neither shall he follow the speach of a craftes man, or carter, or other of the inferiour sort, though he be inhabitant or bred in the best towne or Citie of this Realme, for such persons doe abuse good speaches by strange accents or ill shapen soundes, and false ortografie. But he shall follow generally the better brought up sort, such as the Greekes call [*charientes*] men civill and graciously behavoured and bred.

Our maker, therfore, at these dayes, shall not follow Piers plowman, nor Gower, nor Lydgate, nor yet Chaucer, for their language is now out of use with us; neither shall he take the termes of Northern-men, such as they use in daily talke, whether they be noblemen, or gentlemen, or of their best clarkes all is a matter; nor in effect any speach used beyond the river of Trent; though no man can deny but that theirs is the purer English Saxon at this day, yet it is not so Courtly nor so currant as our Southerne English is, no more is the far Westerne man's speach: ye shall therfore take the usuall speach of the Court, and that of London and the shires lying about London, within lx. myles and not much above. I say not this but that in every shyre of England there be gentlemen and others that speake but specially write as good Southerne as we of Middlesex or Surrey do, but not the common people of every shire, to whom the gentlemen, and also their learned clarkes do for the most part condescend, but herein we are already ruled by the English Dictionaries and other bookes written by learned men, and therefore it needeth none other direction in that behalfe.—George Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie*, p. 120 f.

Every idiom would be found to rest upon some historical cause, if we could only trace it up to its source. Most idioms are indeed too ancient or too obscure for this solution to be applicable, but we may find typical instances which may serve as general illustrations. Such an instance we have in the much canvased Double Genitive. This idiom rose out of a compromise between English and French forms at the epoch of the Transition. We had then as we have now two forms of genitive in use, the one English, the other French. The genitive in *-s* is English, the genitive with *of* is French, as this preposition in this place does but represent the French *de*. There are certain phrases in which by Cumulation (Häufung as the Germans call it) both these formulæ are brought into action on the same occasion. In the later months of 1873 there was a brisk correspondence on this subject in the pages of *Notes and Queries*. The leader of the discussion condemned the idiom as insular, barbarous, and unintelligible; nor was he daunted by the names which he himself freely quoted, such as 'a favourite view of the general's' from Miss Edgeworth; 'that dark and tempestuous life of Swift's' from Thackeray; from S. G. O. the correspondent of *The Times* 'this letter of Lord Shaftesbury's,' and other authorities equally good.

It was observed by Sir George Cornewall Lewis that there was a practical utility in this peculiar idiom, as it enabled us to distinguish between 'a picture of the king,' which is a representation of the king's person; and 'a picture of the king's,' which would mean one belonging to the king. The spontaneity of this formula is indicated by its antiquity. It occurs in the Paston Letters (No. 58 ed. Gairdner) as early as 1448—'two plowemen of my modyrs.'

Now it is quite in the spirit of grammatical culture to condemn this as a barbarism. It may be admitted that it is a barbarism so far as this, that it is a national peculiarity which finds no parallel in the usage of any other polite language; that it arose not out of classical or belletristic fondness; that it is neither more nor less than an easy colloquial rambling illogical phrase which has somehow acquired literary value. But this is no ground for rejection;

on the contrary it is a ground for that higher appreciation which is due to Idiom.

Such expressions as these tend to give to the discourse an English character, to rescue it from trite conventionality, and to render it idiomatic. For when we speak of idiomatic English, it should be observed that we do not only mean English which is free from Gallicisms or Germanisms, but rather English which has a distinctly English savour about it. It is almost better to have some tinge of foreign idiom, than no idiom at all; for idiom imparts that feature and character without which there must be a lack of nature.

The English Noun-phrase.

If there is in the ordinary course of English Grammar any formula of speech that is more particularly and especially English, it is the combination of substantive with substantive, the first qualifying the second, like the parts of a Compound, only each apart and not compounded. As the habit of compound-making is German, as the device of qualifying by *of*-phrase is French, so the structure of noun qualifying noun is pre-eminently English.[1] Its great utility for compactness and smartness of expression needs not be demonstrated, as it is self-evident. This, like every other faculty, is put in requisition by Carlyle, and strained well-nigh to the cracking-point. Thus

historian eye-witnesses.

Never, according to Historian eye-witnesses, was there seen such an ' imposing attitude.'—*French Rev.* II. iv. 4.

In the following example we have the first or adjectival member of a Noun-phrase separated from its second or substantival member in the same way as might happen to any formal Adjective.

The representatives of unlimited joint-stock banks in town and country have considered in separate meetings whether it is advisable to take advantage of the recent Banking Act by adopting limited

[1] *English Philology*, § 565 and following.

liability. There seems to have been a nearer approach to unanimity in favour of employing the Act on the part of the country than of London banks.—*The Guardian*, October 29, 1879.

A good old ancestral idiom is that whereby a plural or collective subject is fitted with a verb in the singular number. It is of one pedigree with the German *Es sind, Es waren*; only we cannot say 'It are, it were' in the indicative, but we can put *it* with a verb singular to a plural subject. The following translation by Dean Alford of Hebrews iii. 16 will serve as an illustration:

For who, when they had heard, provoked?—nay, was it not all who came out from Egypt by means of Moses?

Where Conybeare and Howson have less idiomatically rendered:

Who were they that, though they had heard, did provoke? Were they not all whom Moses brought forth out of Egypt?

All English idiom that is genuine and rises from the native source is more or less directly resoluble into Archaism. This is the nature of the difference between the Flat and Flexional Adverb. The former is archaic, and it is still grammatically approved in German; the latter is modern and is the only one that can be regarded as grammatically approved among ourselves. All that our Flat Adverb stands upon in the places where it survives, is the respectability of its age and the favour of good authors. In this particular the limits are narrower than they were. Up to the end of last century or later, the adverbs *scarce* and *near*, which are obsolete now, were still used in good prose.

This thought ran long in my head, and I was exceedingly fond of it for some time, the pleasantness of the place tempting me; but when I came to a nearer view of it, I considered that I was now by the sea-side, where it was at least possible that something might happen to my advantage; and, by the same ill fate that brought me hither, might bring some other unhappy wretches to the same place; and though it was scarce probable that any such thing should ever happen, yet to inclose myself among the hills and woods in the centre of the island, was to anticipate my bondage, and to

render such an affair not only improbable, but impossible; and that therefore I ought not by any means to remove.—*Robinson Crusoe.*

A broad-wheeled waggon, attended by two men, and drawn by eight horses, in about six weeks time carries and brings back between London and Edinburgh near four ton weight of goods.—Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Book i. c. 3.

But the current prices of labour at distant times and places can scarce ever be known with any degree of exactness.—*Id.* c. 5.

In this matter there is no grammatical rule that is all-guiding; there is still room for some exercise of discretion. In certain connections the old Flat Adverb is still the only one used by good authors. Thus we write 'speak loud' or 'speak louder'—not 'loudly' nor 'more loudly'[1]; and 'speak plain' not 'plainly.' In like manner, 'to walk fast,' 'walk slow,' not 'fastly' nor 'slowly'; 'the moon shines bright,' or 'the moon shines dim,' not 'brightly' nor 'dimly.' In the following portrait 'broadly built' should be 'broad-built'; and 'usually tightly buttoned' is infelicitous. Why not 'usually buttoned tight'?

He is a broadly-built, short-looking, black-haired man, whose comparatively big frame is usually tightly buttoned within a capacious frock coat: and he has a square head with a cliff-like brow, already deeply lined, and a nose which gives a character of pugnacity and determination to the entire face.—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 21, 1888.

As no rule can be given for the use of *-ly*, so it is a rather severe test of the fullness of a writer's literary experience. In a recent work of fiction, published under high auspices, I was astonished to find the following:—

[1] I remember some years ago, at the time when the Telephone was a novelty, being where many were assembled to see the new medium of communication, in a place which was not exactly a public place, and yet where many who were unknown to each other came together without ceremony. A young couple, faultless in dress and in manner, were calculated to attract attention, and in fact they were observed with interest by several of the company. By turns we all went to try the Telephone, and to say something in the way of dialogue wit the voice at the other end. The young gentleman in question said: 'Speak rather more loudly'—and from that moment the interest in him and his companion visibly slackened.

He was very angry, and boxed Dick's ears for him, which served him rightly.

Here we may recall De Quincey's outbreak against *firstly*.

I detest your ridiculous and most pedantic neologism of *firstly*. *The Spanish Military Nun*, c. 5.

It is an old and often-discussed question, which is the more correct, to say 'the two first' or 'the first two.' It is certainly an English idiom to say 'the two first' or 'the three first'; as we mostly do say when we are speaking quite at our ease. But it is generally admitted that according to grammatical propriety we ought to say 'the first three.' In *Good Words* for January 1867 Dean Alford vindicated 'the three first' and maintained that it was as good an expression as the other. But the one is not so good as the other, because it is not so capable of extension, and does not so readily accommodate itself to other arrangements of the language. Upon the analogy of 'the three first' we should naturally proceed to say 'the ten first,' 'the twenty first,' 'the thirty first.' In these latter instances it is found to clash with the formula which is used to express the Ordinal of 21 and 31; and such clashing would lead to inconvenience if not to confusion.

Therefore the form 'the first three' is better than the other, not because it is more logical, but because it falls in better with the system of the language. We may safely say 'the first twenty,' 'the first thirty,' or 'the first' anything, without fear of confusion;—but however much I may desire to preserve idiomatic English I could not recommend any one to write, 'the two first,' or 'the three first.' And there are a few other homely colloquial idioms which every scholar will instinctively exclude from his diction. Such an idiom is this:—'It is better not to trust to the weather more than you can help.'

Between Idiom and Grammar there must be give and take. The case may be illustrated by the construction of a house. When a man has all his material ready to build, he begins to consider dimensions and proportions. These are matters of the elementary mathematics. But when he has made up his mind as to what he wants each room and chamber and passage

to be, he has to do the harder task of putting all that together into a house which shall be both convenient in its arrangement and sightly in its aspect. And here he will perhaps have to modify many of the parts which he had separately imagined and created in his mind. So that whereas his several chambers were mathematically symmetrical, he may find it necessary to sacrifice fancy to system. Even so in language it is possible that consistency may restrain what idiom permits. But if we continue our simile and imagine that the building is not all new but an enlargement of an old edifice, then still more may it prove impossible to have right angles everywhere. Fair open symmetry and mathematical proportions are like Grammar: odd angles, and crinkum-crankums, are like Idioms in a language, the irregularities which naturally arise in a fabric that has been put together at no one period and upon no uniform plan.

When we are in doubt upon a question of idiom, which of two structures is the native English, a ready way of determining it is by considering which of the two is colloquial, and still more, which of the two is rustic. If a formula is both rustic and colloquial, we may be pretty confident that it is vernacular. It is colloquial and rustic to say 'Where do you come from?' and 'Where are you going to?' It is pedantic to say 'From what place do you come?' 'Whence do you come?' or 'From whence do you come?' or 'Whither are you going?'

This brings us to the so-called 'Anglicism'—that is to say, the supposed illiterate placement of the separable verbal particle, which according to a genuine English idiom is sometimes relegated to the end of a clause or sentence.

The alternative often presents itself, Which we will prefer of the two following structures—'that which I spoke to you about,' or 'that about which I spoke to you';—'that which I am thinking of,' or 'that of which I am thinking'; 'the conclusion we may arrive at,' or 'the conclusion at which we may arrive';—'material to carve a bust out of,' or 'material out of which to carve a bust.'

Alford rules that it is more elegant to say 'the man to whom I had written' than 'the man I had written to':—

but he allows that 'you are the man I wanted to have some talk with' would always be preferred to 'you are the man with whom I wanted to have some talk.'

Here let it be noticed in passing, that good critics, such as Dryden and Dean Alford and Professor Henry Reed (quoted below) have spoken of these little words *about, of, at,* &c., as Prepositions. This is not exact: for these words are not of the same Part of Speech in the one collocation as in the other. In the one case the moveable word is a Preposition, but in the other it is an Adverb;—under these circumstances, it is convenient to adopt a neutral term and speak of them as Particles.

The historical difference between these structures is simply this, that the one is according to the English, the other according to the French idiom. Looking at the last example, the 'talk with' formula is English, the 'with whom' formula is French. The former is so genuinely English that we may well appropriate to it Hallam's term, and call it an, or rather the, 'Anglicism.' It was Dryden—and he formed his style upon the French writers Montaigne, Balzac, Voiture—who first stigmatized this turn:—"the preposition in the end of the sentence, a common fault with him [Ben Jonson], and which I have but lately observed in my own writings.' In the later editions of his *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*, published in 1668, Dryden altered such passages.

Thus, 'I cannot think so contemptibly of the age I live in' is altered to 'the age in which I live.' This I borrow from Hallam, and I will transcribe also part of his comment upon this so-called Anglicism. He says:—

> And though the old form continued in use long after the time of Dryden, it has of late years been reckoned inelegant, and proscribed in all cases, perhaps with an unnecessary fastidiousness, to which I have not uniformly deferred; since our language is of a Teutonic structure, and the rules of Latin or French are not always to bind us.

And I believe that any one, who thinks it worth attending to, may often, in the course of reading, notice sentences which would have run better if the author had condescended to use

the homely idiom in this respect. In the following example from an eminent living author, 'in which in' might have been avoided, and the sentence might have closed thus—'which in his younger days he had taken part in.'

Now, we feel lively interest when a veteran statesman or soldier gives us his recollections of stirring events in which in his younger days he had taken part.

The idea that the French idiom is the more elegant is largely due to its being the newer fashion. It springs from the time when in the minds of too many among the English people who aimed at refinement, French and Elegant were almost convertible epithets. Or, to put it otherwise, it is elegant only because it is felt to be literary and cultivated, and remote from the phraseology of common life. Forty years ago, this particular point was made much of by educational authority, and it is one of the most tangible indications of the restitution of English, that it is no longer so very tenaciously stickled for. I remember a theological student of that epoch who came straight to my rooms from the Theological Professor to whom he had carried a Sermon which he had written as an exercise; and as I, at that time, was looking forward to the same career, I asked him with much interest what corrections the Professor had made in his composition. The Professor had told him not to say 'things which he had hoped for' but 'things for which he had hoped'—and that was all.

To the tests above named, we may add, that if a structure is found in the English Bible, it is generally a good testimony to its vernacular character. This 'Anglicism' is frequent in the Bible:—'that which I have spoken to thee of,' Genesis xxviii. 15; 'not that I had ought to accuse my nation of,' Acts xxviii. Fresh examples of this structure occur in the revised New Testament of 1881, e.g. Mark xv. 4.

In many of the above examples there is the alternative, whether we will have the English or the Romanesque turn of the sentence, but this is not always the case: there is no such alternative in the following quotation:

It is wiser then for the most part to leave these excesses to the

gradual operation of public opinion; and this seems to me the healthiest way of putting them down.

Here the only way of romanizing the expression is to put a Roman word in place of 'putting down'; we might say 'healthiest way of abating, correcting, suppressing them.' And this is the example which presents this idiomatic question in its purity, and is the most typical as representing the bulk of the instances in which it comes into play. The implication of 'which,' 'whom' is accidental; the essential question is whether it is or is not good English to let your sentence close with a verbal Particle. And on this general question I should like to quote a paragraph from a little book by Professor Henry Reed of Pennsylvania University, entitled *Introduction to English Literature.*

Let me exemplify this tendency away from the native character of the language in the structure of sentences as well as in the choice of words. I refer to the frequent abandonment of that peculiarly characteristic arrangement which puts a preposition at the end of a sentence. This is eminently an English idiom, and nothing but prejudice arising from misapplied analogy with the Southern languages, and the propensity to make style more formal and less idiomatic, could ever have led any one to suppose this construction to be wrong. The false fastidiousness which shuns a short particle at the end of a sentence, is fatal often to a force which belongs to the language with its primal character. The superiority of the idiom I am referring to, could be proved beyond question by examples of the best writing in all the eras of the language. As the error is pretty wide spread, let me cite a few of these. Lord Bacon says, 'Houses are built to live in, and not to look on;' and again, 'Revenge is a kind of wild justice, which the more a man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out.' Any attempt to transpose these separable prepositions would destroy the strength and the terseness of the sentences. Even a stronger example occurs in a passage in Donne, one of the great English divines, a contemporary of Bacon's: 'Hath God a name to swear by? . . . Hath God a name to curse by? Hath God a name to blaspheme by? and hath God no name to pray by?' The opening sentence of one of Mr. Burke's most celebrated speeches is—'The times we live in have been distinguished by extraordinary events;' Dr. Franklin's phrase, with its twenty-five Saxon and

four Latin words: '. . . William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk about my age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals of any man I ever met with.' And observe such a sentence as this of Arnold's, 'Knowledge must be worked for, studied for, thought for; and, more than all, it must be prayed for.' I really think that people, in writing and speaking, might get over their fear of finding a preposition at the end of their sentences.

Such a structure is found in two of the clauses in the following quotation; but I hardly think that any reader who is endowed with an eye, an ear, and a mind, will be disposed to quarrel with it.

Vain man would be wise, and he curiously examines the works of Nature, as if they were lifeless and senseless, as if he alone had intelligence, and they were base inert matter, however curiously contrived at the first. So he goes on, tracing the order of things, seeking for Causes in that order, giving names to the wonders he meets with, and thinking he understands what he has given a name to. At length he forms a Theory, and recommends it in writing, and calls himself a philosopher.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, ii. 362, 'The Feast of St. Michael and All Angels.'

This 'Anglicism,' where a preposition or rather a particle closes the sentence must not be confounded with the case where a sentence ends with the preposition *to* as the symbol of an unexpressed Infinitive.

Also the post-posited Preposition, or the Preposition which happens to be placed remote from its government, is quite a distinct thing from the 'Anglicism' which we have been considering. In the sentence 'The industrious husbandman plants trees of which he will never taste the fruit'—the Relative Conjunction *of which* is a Romanesque construction, that is to say, though the words 'of which' are English words, the manner of their use in this sentence is after the Roman syntax. The native idiom is 'The industrious husbandman plants trees which he will never taste the fruit of.' Here the 'of' is genitival, signifying 'of the trees.'

Sometimes this *of* genitival is left hanging at the end clumsily and ungrammatically. In a recent money-levying testimonial, the following occurs:

This is the widow's son, Austen Mackay, whom we, the Committee to this testimonial, hope and trust every Irishman in Clare will cheerfully subscribe, that he may be enabled in his present state of health to get into some business under the protection of the Stars and Stripes, where he is a citizen of.

The next example is useful, as showing in 'standing up for' the juxtaposition of the two things, namely, the 'Anglicism' and the postponed preposition of government. The instance is all the more interesting, as the sequel exhibits the same elements with a variation in which 'for' is restored to the place ordinarily held by a governing preposition.

How little they feel that it is a valuable thing, that it is a treasure they are possessed of, ennobling and elevating those who have it, and worth standing up for. . . . . Whereas these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were able to withstand the rage and fury of the Assyrian monarch, and all the pride and power of Babylon, because they had this consciousness of being in possession of a great treasure in the truth for which they stood up.—J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, VIII.

When foreign idioms are introduced into an English context, they are called Latinisms, or Grecisms, or Hebraisms, or Gallicisms, or Kelticisms, or Germanisms. Analogous expressions exist in all literary languages. The Dictionary of the French Academy assigns the French term *Anglicisme* to 'façons de parler empruntées à la langue anglaise, et transportées dans une autre langue.' But what is peculiar in our case is this, that we among our idioms possess, not only the *isms* above enumerated, all based on the borrowed fashions of some foreign tongue, but we have to take account also of an idiom, which has established for itself in our own literature the name of 'Anglicism.' A curious thing that 'Anglicism' should stand for a peculiarity of idiom in the diction of English: but so it is.

The idiom which is called Kelticism consists in the un-English use of the auxiliary *will, would*, where every man born on English soil would employ *shall, should*. Dean Alford said that he never knew but one man born on Keltic soil who was to be depended upon in this item, and even that one failed

ultimately to sustain his exceptional reputation by a slip he was detected in for the first time after an intimacy of twenty years. This Kelticism occurs repeatedly in Burke's correspondence, especially in the earlier years. Thus in 1744, when he was sixteen years old, writing from Dublin to Richard Shackleton his schoolfellow, he said: 'Oh! how happy are you who live in the country! I assure you, my friend, that without the superior grace of God, I will find it very difficult to be commonly virtuous.'

This idiom is not rare in the prose of Sir Walter Scott. The following quotations are from the pen of Sir James Simpson. That eminent physician was in early life an unsuccessful candidate for the post of surgeon to the small village of Inverkip, and he thus spoke of it many years after:

> When not selected, I felt perhaps a deeper amount of chagrin and disappointment than I have ever experienced since that date. If chosen, I would probably have been working there as a village doctor still.

In 1839, when he became a candidate for the Professorship of Midwifery at Edinburgh, he thus wrote to his brother:

> I have been told by a member of the Council, that they have no objection to me but my youth and my celibacy, and that if any person in Scotland gets it, I will, notwithstanding these defects.

In the 'Guardian' of July 10, 1889, a clergyman with a Keltic surname writes from Ireland to say that he is going out as chaplain on board a certain ship to Montreal, and then he adds—

> I will be glad to hear of persons sailing by this ship and to help them in any way I can.

All marked idioms have an historical origin; and many of our English idioms are really Gallicisms, which grew out of the close contact of English with French, in the centuries succeeding the Norman Conquest. Some old French idioms are thoroughly domesticated among us, and now pass for native and characteristic English.

Voltaire jeered at the absurdity of our English idiom *How do you do?* which he represented thus: *Comment faites-vous faire?* But M. Génin has shown by quotations from French medieval writers that *Comment le faites vos?* was the French phrase of salutation, which is found as early as the twelfth and as late as the fifteenth century.[1]

Another, which we may class in the same category, is a phrase which now bears the stamp of excessive homeliness; —but it is only a translation of the French phrase 'C'est moi.'

it's me.

I sent him up there to visit his uncle, that he might hear what his uncle says as well as what I say, and shouldn't think it's only me.—*Winged Words*, From the Life of a Lady, 1880.

The Romanesque Relative *Who, Which,* was an innovation in our language, and has never settled down quite comfortably with the older elements. It had the effect of bringing in some Romanesque structures in the colligation of clauses which have enjoyed the favour of fashion and have prevailed, but their ascendency is now subject to a more jealous scrutiny than heretofore. It will be easier to signify what I mean by an example than by general description. In Luke vii. 4, the Revision of 1611 has this:—'they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this.' But in the Revision of 1881 this is altered to the following form:—'besought him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that thou shouldest do this for him.' The difference between 'worthy for whom' and 'worthy that . . . for him' is the difference between a Romanesque idiom and an English one, and the phrase which in 1881 supersedes the phrase of 1611, is the elder phrase, which has long been waiting the restitution of its natural rights.

In order to show how much discomfort this frenchified Relative has occasioned, it may be convenient to see how the exploring mind of Cobbett laboured and was vexed at the inconformabilities of it. He says:

[1] Quoted by P. Sadler, *Grammaire Pratique de la Langue Anglaise*, 25th edition, Paris, 1879, p. 393.

There is, however, an erroneous way of employing *whom*, which I must point out to your particular attention, because it is so often seen in very good writers, and because it is very deceiving. 'The Duke of Argyll, *than whom* no man was more hearty in the cause.' 'Cromwell, *than whom* no man was better skilled in artifice.' A hundred such phrases might be collected from Hume, Blackstone, and even from Doctors Blair and Johnson. Yet they are bad grammar. In all such cases, *who* should be made use of: for, it is *nominative* and not objective. 'No man was more hearty in the cause *than he was*; no man was better skilled in artifice *than he was*. It is a very common Parliament-House phrase, and therefore presumptively corrupt: but it is a Doctor Johnson phrase too; 'Pope, than whom few men had more vanity.' Bishop Lowth says that 'the relative *who*, having reference to no verb or preposition understood, but only to its antecedent, when it follows *than*, is *always in the objective case*: even though the Pronoun, if substituted in its place, would be in the nominative.' And he gives an instance from Milton. 'Beelzebub, *than whom*, Satan except, none higher sat.'

And even after such foreign idioms seem to have become quite naturalized and familiarized among us, there will every now and then emerge some nodule of angularity which has not been quite polished down. Of this sort is the Relative *which*, a Saxon word, but a French Relative, whose functions as a Relative are every now and then reviving the half-forgotten history of its foreign extraction. In the following quotation from a writer who is as a rule most loyally English, it seems an audacious thing to say that the *which* stands out as more French than English:—yet so it is.

> England's crime in the eyes of Rome—the crime to punish which William's crusade was approved and blessed—was the independence still retained by the island, Church, and nation.

In point of idiom few distinctions are more telling than that which may be represented by the formula—'Which or not Which?' Thus, you may either say 'material out of which to carve a bust'—or 'material to carve a bust out of.' Yet the alternative is not universally equipollent;—there certainly are cases wherein the Which-structure must have the preference. Thus:—

For centuries the Coliseum served as a quarry out of which materials were dug for palaces and churches.

The question of Idiom is essentially a question of the history of a language or dialect relatively to other languages or dialects, and in the case of a language so varied in its relations as ours has been, this question is diversified with several incidents. The 'and which' difficulty belongs here; it is a difficulty that rose out of the clash of idioms. The native English has no such Relative Pronouns as *who*, *which*, *what*; all these words were Interrogatives, and they became Relatives by imitation of Latin and French. It is the unskilful use of these Relatives when they come to act as Conjunctions, and the combining a needless 'and' with them, which gives rise to the objectionable conjunctional phrase 'and which,' 'and who,' and the rest; and, according to Dean Alford, 'the fault is one of the very commonest in the writings of careless or half-educated persons.' He found two instances of this misconstruction upon one page and the same page of a charitable report: 'The Board offer their grateful acknowledgments for the liberal support hitherto so freely extended, and which has so greatly contributed to this satisfactory result.' 'It was feared that the untimely death of the surgeon to the hospital, occurring as it did so very shortly after its opening, and to whose untiring energy the Institution mainly owes its existence, might seriously affect its future prospects and position.' To these examples of a structure not to be imitated, we may add the following:

A pretty Government to depend on, and which our stupid and ignorant press is lauding to the skies for its admirable and chivalrous conduct as compared to ours.—*Greville Memoirs*, January 16, 1854.

It should have been 'and one which'—or else, 'and yet our stupid &c. is lauding it &c.'

The following is from a Master of English, but no weight of authority can make it passable:

Coningsby, not experienced in feminine society, and who found a little difficulty from want of practice in maintaining conversation,

was delighted with Lady Everingham, &c.—*Coningsby*, Book iii. c. 3.

But it must not be hastily concluded that every instance of the combination 'and which' is absolutely unallowable. The clause, which is linked to the foregoing by 'who' or 'which,' does not indeed admit 'and' with it; but if two such 'which' clauses are in serial order, the second naturally and with perfect propriety takes 'and which.'

That deference for the opinions of older people, which has its roots in the past, in the training of fathers and mothers in courtesy and gentleness, and which blossoms in perfection in the third or fourth generation.—Margaret Deland, *John Ward, Preacher.*

In the following sentence 'and who' is pure in idiom and sound in Grammar:

In one of the volumes of Professor Tyndall's collected writings, there is a story of an American capitalist who endeavoured to enlist a man skilled in original research in the profitable employment of certain scientific principles, and who described himself as being awe-stricken by the reply of the philosopher, that 'he had no time to waste in making money.'—*The Times*, June 30, 1887.

A phrase, wherein this French Relative long held a tenure from which it has been ultimately dislodged, is *such . . . who, such . . . which*, prevalent in the seventeenth and some part of the eighteenth century. It is a standing structure in Clarendon. The following is from Richard Steele in the *Tatler*, 1709.

There are several persons who have many pleasures and entertainments in their possession, which they do not enjoy. It is therefore a kind and good office to acquaint them with their own happiness, and turn their attention to such instances of their good fortune which they are apt to overlook.

THE DEFINITE ARTICLE.—There is in French a certain prodigality of the Definite Article, at least so it appears to us who speak of *virtue, war*, where the French say *la vertu, la guerre*. In Clarendon ii. 41, we read—'though himself had not seen more of the war than two or three campaigns in Holland'; where 'the war' is a Gallicism for which we now say simply

'war.' In this case the Gallicism though it found entrance into good authors, has since been rejected by current usage; but there are cases where it has fallen out otherwise. For example, our native English idiom called a river by its simple name, Thames or Severn, and it is only by the adoption of French idiom that we have now formed the habit of saying 'the Thames, the Severn.' In Leland's *Itinerary* may be seen the practice of Henry the Eighth's time.

> Ledes, two miles lower down than Christal Abbey, on Aire ryver, is a praty market, having one paroche churche, reasonably well builded, and as large as Bradforde, but not so quick.

In the English Bible there is never a 'the' before Jordan or Euphrates, or any other river. In the Revision of 1881 this Gallicism has for the first time been admitted into our Biblical English.

The following illustration I copy from the very print of 1611:—

> He filleth all things with his wisdome, as Physon, and as Tigris in the time of the new fruits. He maketh the vnderstanding to abound like Euphrates, and as Jorden in the time of the haruest.—Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 25, 26.

A phrase may look plain enough, and yet contain the seeds of confusion, as did that phrase 'to the prejudice of the purchaser,' a phrase which no one would have ever expected a fuss to be made over. This innocent-looking expression occurred in the Adulteration Act of 1875, and threatened at one moment to upset and nullify the whole measure. For if an inspector, or indeed for that matter if any person whatsoever, bought an article for the purpose of testing it, he did not buy it for use; and if it proved adulterated it was argued in the interest of the defendant that the sale of that article was not 'to the prejudice of the purchaser.' All the stipendiary magistrates of London and several Scotch Lords of Session held that this phrase protected the false traders. But Mr. Justice Lush in his judgment of March 29, 1879, was able to show from the reading of the whole Act, that 'the purchaser' was not to be understood as equivalent to 'that purchaser,' but rather as equivalent to 'a purchaser.' So a phantom

which had raised the hopes of fraudulent milkmen, and confounded stipendiary wisdom, was exorcised and laid, by a timely exhibition of common sense and sound English philology.

When bits of foreign idiom have been in English a long time, they become familiar, their strangeness wears off: they become English, they are in fact digested and assimilated. Our language abounds in traces of old borrowings from foreign languages, as the often-quoted Relatives *who*, *which*, *what*, when first they entered English, were a French idiom.[1] The expression 'one knows very well' passes now for English; but it is neither more nor less than the French 'On sait fort bien.' The native English is: 'We know very well.' In Macaulay's strictures on the excessive Gallicism of Horace Walpole's style, an example is quoted which unites both the instances now given. 'One knows what temperaments Annibal Caracci painted.' It would be easy to multiply examples, and there is at least one that ought not to be forgotten. The prevalent Genitive in current English is formed with help of the preposition *of*, and nobody thinks of this as a foreign idiom. But this is only because the importation took place long ago. It is a French idiom, an imitation of the French Genitive with *de*.

Here we may throw together a few specimens of those minor phrases which from time to time glide into our speech from the strange fascination of French usage. The singular charm of French prose is one among many causes for that attraction: it renders the assimilative processes easy if not unconscious, and the results of it are visible in the pages of most of our best writers. In the following quotation 'according to me' is simply a translation of the French *selon moi*.

> The mistake, according to me, lies in selecting these struggles to fill the foreground of the scene.—J. R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England*, i. 7.

To the same category belongs the phrase 'to efface himself' from *s'effacer*.

If we stop for a moment to think how his place would have been

[1] See my *English Philology*, § 81; 472.

filled had the Prince of Wales chosen to efface himself, to consider that until he was called to reign he had no special public duties, and that the people of England had no right to expect him to undertake the work he has in fact undertaken, we can easily gauge the usefulness of his career.—*The Standard*, Jan. 12, 1889.

These borrowings affect the reader with a sense of crudeness; and still more so does the phrase 'it goes without saying' (after the French *cela va sans dire*), which is sometimes met with, though hardly worthy of English prose.

Tints and shades of meaning have often been taken from the French, and change has been imported into established words giving them an altered complexion. Sometimes it is a lighter meaning than before, as when the words *consecrate*, *consecration*, are applied on trivial occasions, and some other light uses of solemn words. Sometimes it is a heavier meaning, as in that burdensome executive sense of the word *requisition*, when it is used for the authoritative taking of a man's goods by force. This was an old French law term, which has been diffused since the Revolution, and coming into English it has quite stifled the former usage according to which the word meant a personal request, or the claim of a civil right.

Had you been well, I am sure you would have written, according to your engagement and my requisition.—Lord Chesterfield.

It was an incident of good fortune, that I should be at Rennes at the time of this solemn requisition. The Marquis d'E., after twenty years' application to business, was come to reclaim his nobility.—Sterne, *Sentimental Journey*.

We may pursue this subject even into matters of spelling. It is now becoming rather usual, when we write foreign names, to write them in foreign orthography. Thus Louis and not 'Lewis.' Macaulay however did not yield to this fashion; he always wrote the French king down in English form, 'Lewis,' and so does Mr. Samuel R. Gardiner.

At the time when the word 'telegram' was introduced among us, an elevated discussion, mounted upon a high platform of Greek scholarship, rose in the newspapers; and one famous Cantabrigian would have it that the only correct form was *telegraphēme*. But the whole thing was dissolved in

laughter when *The Saturday Review* (October 31, 1857) pointed out that we were by no means answerable for the Greek of it, inasmuch as it was an established French Grecism 'télégramme' which we had adopted.

A large number of our French borrowings have entered the language through works of fiction, and in no small measure through the pens of lady authors. We had already in common use the words *inconsecutive* and *inconsecutiveness*, when their French doubles *inconsequent* and *inconsequence* (nearly forty years ago) began their English career. I cannot say that the authoress of *North and South* introduced them, but it was in that book I first took note of them.

The next morning brought Margaret a letter from Edith. It was affectionate and inconsequent like the writer. But the affection was charming to Margaret's own affectionate nature; and she had grown up with the inconsequence, so she did not perceive it.—*North and South*, vol. ii. p. 45.

The French are peculiarly apt at phrase-making. Many turns of speech which we have taken from them have become so familiar and domesticated, that their source is forgotten. But we may recall one or two. 'There are ladies and ladies,' to express that the same term does not always carry the same value.

One French idiom has been introduced which tends to confusion. The phrase 'nothing less than' is now sometimes seen in the sense of 'anything but,' after the French *rien moins que*, as in the following quotation.

Ce qui l'affligeait surtout, c'était de voir son grand séminaire aux mains d'un homme dont les doctrines, à ses yeux, n'étaient rien moins qu'orthodoxes.—Ferdinand Favre, *L'Abbé Tigrane*, c. 4.

What chiefly troubled him was to see his Grand Seminary in the hands of a man whose doctrines, in his opinion, were anything but orthodox.

This Gallicism is inconvenient, because there is a well-established English phrase of the self-same form with the opposite meaning. In Shakspeare 'nothing less than' means 'nothing but'; thus—'my father's execution was nothing less than bloody tyranny.' Hen. VI. Part I. ii. 5. 100.

We cannot draw any strong line of distinction between the foreign 'idiom' strictly so called, and the general disposition to introduce un-English words. They both belong to the same disposition, that of the writer who likes surface ornament, and lacks a due sense of consistency and symmetry. The whole tone of criticism since the seventeenth century has more and more inclined to set itself against this superficial taste. Cobbett, as a self-taught man, might have been expected to favour an occasional word of Latin; yet see how he reasoned, in the following quotation which is taken from his Grammar:—

'Ten shillings *the* bushel,' and like phrases are perfectly correct. They mean, 'ten shillings *by the* bushel, or *for the* bushel.' Instead of this mode of expression we sometimes use, 'ten shillings *a* bushel': that is to say, ten shillings *for a* bushel, or a bushel *at a time*. Either of these modes of expression is far preferable to *per* bushel; for the *per* is not English, and is, to the greater part of the people, a mystical sort of word.

But on the other hand it must be admitted there is every now and then a desire for a mystical sort of word, a preference for something uncommon, because the writer disdains old formulæ when he has something new to communicate, or because he has a fancy to magnify the subject in hand and to make it portentous in the reader's imagination. Carlyle introduced a whole forest of mystical and portentous words, and the success which he achieved is evidence that this process, however hazardous, is practicable, because it is genuine, and seated in human nature. But it is easier to evaluate the motive when we catch isolated examples, as in the following:

vim.

As has frequently happened, the founders of the *Herald* lacked capital, but there was one man among them who possessed what has often proved to be of more importance than capital—courage, *vim*, pertinacity, and grim determination to make the venture a go—coupled with great administrative ability, and that was Mr. James W. Scott, the business manager.—*Harper's New Monthly Magazine*; No. 461, October 1888, p. 689:—'Western Journalism.'

There are occasions in which a new and strange word may

be not admissible only, but justifiable, and effective, and even admirable as good Art. I do not think I ever saw the word *rendition* (for 'rendering') until I met it in the following context, taken from Dr. Kellogg's book entitled *The Light of Asia and The Light of the World* (1885), p. 125, and there the reader soon satisfies himself that the unusual word was called forth by a strange phenomenon in poetic licence over which it was well to erect a beacon that might be likely to warn the passer-by. The subject of criticism is the clever poem entitled *The Light of Asia* by Sir Edwin Arnold, from which the critic has just been quoting passages which appropriate Scripture language in a manner calculated to make a fallacious impression on the reader. The thoughts and words of Christ as reported in the Gospels are by the poet put into the breast and mouth of the Buddha.

Did space permit, we might compare with the above poetical rendition of the story the phraseology of the corresponding passages in the legend as we have it in various native authorities. It would form a suggestive and remarkable illustration of the subject of poetic license. We venture to doubt whether in any extant authority a warrant for these and other verbal coincidences can be shown. It would at least be very desirable that Mr. Arnold should give to the public an edition of his poem embodying references to the Buddhist authorities which justify the language of these phrases. Meantime, these unverified, and, if we mistake not, unverifiable and unwarrantable suggestions are doing their work in starting doubts in the minds of many as to the trustworthiness of the Gospel story—doubts which in no case have any reason in ascertained facts.

Latinism.

In the present century Latinism has greatly subsided, but in the three previous centuries the prose is full of it. Hooker in his Preface writes thus: 'The chiefest thing which lay-reformers yawn for is, that the clergy may through conformity in state and condition be apostolical, poor as the apostles of Christ were poor'—Chap. iv. 3. Here the word *yawn* is not used according to English usage, but it stands for the Latin verb *hiare*, to gape with admiration and desire. In Clarendon's *History*, i. 85, 'the ill success was heavily borne,' we

see a phrase which is due to the Latin *ægrè, graviter ferre.* In other places he uses *him* or *his* with a demonstrative force which had long been disused in pure English, and which can only be accounted for by Latin studies. Thus ii. 130,—'Every man there considered only what application would be most like to raise his own fortune, or to do him harm with whom he was angry,'—where 'to do him harm with whom he was angry' runs upon the lines of 'ei nocere cui irasceretur.' So again in his character of Mr. Hampden, iii. 31:—'He made so great a show of civility, and modesty, and humility, and always of mistrusting his own judgment, and of esteeming his with whom he conferred for the present' &c.

Occasionally we meet in Clarendon's beautiful eloquence with Latinism so open and undisguised, that the reader's thoughts are carried back involuntarily to the days of his juvenile studies. Thus, *History* vii. 212: 'It was fought all that day without any such notable turn' &c. calls up old memories of Livy's manner: Pugnatum est totâ die incerto Marte &c. Among Latinisms we must not omit to mention one that was a favourite with the scholars of the seventeenth century, and is often met with in the books of that time. It consists in a peculiar use of the preposition *besides* representing a select and curious usage of the preposition *præter*, not by any means its common or ordinary use. It is indeed good Ciceronian Latin to say 'præter expectationem,' wide of, i.e. contrary to expectation; but 'contrary to' is not the usual sense of *præter*. In this 'precious' sense scholars used *besides*. 'Prince Rupert, besides their fear or expectation, appeared with a strong body of horse,'—*History*, vii. 207.

In the following quotation we see a Latinism in 'therefore followed them, because' which seems to run upon such lines as 'ideo sectarentur quia.'

. . . for they very well knew, how many of their followers therefore followed them, because they believed they would carry all before them.—Clarendon, *History*, iii. 154.

I now proceed to an idiom which, though antiquated, has made too great a figure to be overlooked, and it is one which

may perhaps seem but a dubious Latinism; yet I do not know how to classify it better. That the auxiliary *should* was adopted as a means of representing the Latin Subjunctive preterite is a fact too well known to require demonstration. But there is more than one kind of *should*, and it is of the less ordinary kind that I have here to speak. The ordinary *should* as an auxiliary has been developed from the ancient verb *sceal sceolde* in the sense of owe, owed, ought: but there was a more peculiar application of this verb which was used in the report of statements. It is a well-known German idiom E r s o l l g e s a g t h a b e n, He is said to have said.[1] This use of the verb may be seen in the *Saxon Chronicle*; it is thoroughly national, and in the Latin tyranny it was utilized to express that subjectivity of statement which is so subtly conveyed by the Latin Subjunctive. At the close of the following passage 'somewhat his majesty should have attempted' glances at those who wanted to have it believed that the king had attempted so and so.

> He wrote a letter to the earl of Essex, to be communicated in parliament, that he found there had been strange attempts made to pervert and corrupt the army; . . . and being dated on the sixteenth of August, which must be the time that the king was there, or newly gone, seemed to reflect on somewhat his majesty should have attempted.—Clarendon, *History*, iv. 2.

But though the present tendency seems to point towards the gradual diminution of classicism, yet happily there are exceptions to every general statement about literary movements in English whether of prose or verse. It is thus we escape the tyranny of fashion or the stagnation of conventionality. The Latin cast of diction has still its votaries, and in our day it is most ably represented by the artistic pen of Mr. Walter Pater. His writings afford a frequent taste of the peculiar genius of the Latin sentence so far as it can be assimilated with English Prose.

In the following quotation, which I shrink from mutilating, the scholar will easily discern those parts which especially serve for illustration in this place.

[1] Particulars about this idiom in my *English Philology*, § 237.

The young Marius represented an ancient family whose estate had come down to him much curtailed through the extravagance of a certain Marcellus two generations before, a favourite in his day of the fashionable world at Rome, where he had at least spent his substance with a correctness of taste, which Marius might seem to have inherited from him; as he was believed also to resemble him in a singularly pleasant smile, consistent, however, in the younger face, with some degree of sombre expression when the mind within was but slightly moved.

As the means of life decreased the farm had crept nearer and nearer to the dwelling-house, about which there was therefore a trace of workday negligence or homeliness, not without its picturesque charm for some, for the young master himself among them. The more observant passer-by would note, curious as to the inmates, a certain amount of dainty care amid that neglect, as if it came in part, perhaps, from a reluctance to disturb old associations. It was significant of the national character, that a sort of elegant *gentleman* farming, as we say, was much affected by some of the most cultivated Romans. But it was something more than an elegant diversion, something more of a serious business, with the household of Marius: and his actual interest in the cultivation of the earth and the care of flocks had brought him, at least, intimately near to those elementary conditions of life, a reverence for which, the great Roman poet, as he has shown by his own half-mystic preoccupation with them, held to be the ground of primitive Roman religion, as of primitive morals. But then, farm-life in Italy, including the culture of the vine and the olive, has a peculiar grace of its own, and might well contribute to the production of an ideal dignity of character, like that of nature itself in this gifted region. Vulgarity seemed impossible. The place, though impoverished, was still deservedly dear, full of venerable memories, and with a living sweetness of its own for to-day.—*Marius the Epicurean*, c. ii.

HEBRAISM.

When we consider how devotedly the Hebrew Scriptures were studied in England for some generations, and that the Hebrew students belonged to the class which produced the most popular literature of that time, a prose literature from which our present prose comes by uninterrupted descent; it may seem strange that we can produce few Hebraisms as now extant in English Prose. Undoubtedly

there is a certain truth in what Addison said about the 'infusion' of Hebraisms into English, and he used a happy word, because the thing infused is so dispersed and dissolved that it is no longer recoverable.

It happens very luckily that the Hebrew idioms run into the English tongue with a peculiar grace and beauty. Our language has received innumerable elegancies and improvements from that infusion of Hebraisms, which are derived to it out of the poetical passages of Holy Writ. They give a force and energy to our expressions, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases, than any that are to be met with in our own tongue. There is something so pathetick in this kind of diction, that it often sets the mind in a flame and makes our hearts burn within us.—*Spectator*, No. 405.

Here we have no difficulty in perceiving that the writer was embracing a whole group of associations which came with the Hebrew into his mind, and that he was not contemplating the Hebrew idiom in a dry analytic light. What he says about the English taking kindly to the Hebrew idiom is very true, and it had been said before him by William Tyndale, in *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, A.D. 1528.

The Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than with the Latin. And the properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin. The manner of speaking is both one; so that in a thousand places thou needest not but to translate it into the English, word for word, when thou must seek a compass in the Latin, and yet shalt have much work, to translate it well-favouredly, so that it have the same grace and sweetness, sense and pure understanding with it in the Latin, and as it hath in the Hebrew. A thousand parts better may it be translated into the English, than into the Latin.

This natural affinity between the two languages may partly be the cause why we can now produce but little of manifest Hebrew in English Prose undissolved. Perhaps there is no more definite example than the phrase, 'by the hand of' 'at the hands of,' as in the following.

A body cannot stand, unless the parts thereof be proportionable. Let it therefore be required on both parts, at the hands of the

clergy, to be in meanness of state like the Apostles; at the hand of the laity, to be as they were who lived under the Apostles: and in this reformation there will be, though little wisdom, yet some indifferency.—R. Hooker, *Of the Laws &c.*, Preface iv. 3.

When we consider how frequent are the Hebraisms in the Greek Testament, we may marvel that this sacred language has not left more solid marks at least upon our theological diction. Our biblical diction is indeed tinctured by it as with an infusion, but there is little that can be separated and held up to demonstration. I have but one example ready. There is a Hebrew idiom by which the conjunction *and* makes a connection which modern languages make by a relative pronoun. In Luke vi. 6, this Hebraism appears in the Greek; and the Revisers of 1881 have scrupulously retained it, thus: 'and there was a man there, and his right hand was withered.' The Bible of 1611 has: 'and there was a man, whose right hand was withered.'

Grecism.

I am not aware that we have adopted more than one Grecism in English, namely, the insertion of an adverb between an article and its noun, as in the phrase, 'the then Lord Mayor.' Under this head we may perhaps be justified in bringing the un-English phrase 'the quite contrary,' which stands in the first of our quotations for the usual order, 'quite the contrary.' Also 'the far greatest part' is equally unusual, and seems traceable to the same influence.

All things that exist being particulars, it may perhaps be thought reasonable that words, which ought to be conformed to things, should be so too, I mean in their signification: but yet we find the quite contrary. The far greatest part of words, that make all languages, are general terms: which has not been the effect of neglect or chance, but of reason and necessity.—John Locke, *Essay on the Human Understanding*, III. iii. 1.

the now Cardinal.

The centre figure, if there be a centre, is of course John Henry Newman. Some things are told of the now Cardinal which, after all that has been written about him, will be new to all but his

intimate friends.—Mark Pattison (*Academy*, July 1, 1882) on T. Mozley's *Reminiscences*.

the then Mr. Burgon.

The demerits of these two manuscripts [the Sinaitic and the Vatican] were vigorously urged by the then Mr. Burgon in 1871, in his learned and interesting work on the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel.—*Addresses*, by J. Hannah, Archdeacon of Lewes, 1882; p. 27.

GERMANISM.

The most novel idiom of our day is that Germanism which consists in overcharging the Adjectival phrase, by putting too many qualifying words between the Article (or Pronoun) and the Noun. This is in fact a fragment and a relic of that old periodic structure, which German conservatism retains from old Aryan usage (perhaps in part)—but which has been increased by a scholastic admiration and imitation of Latin. Thus: 'a not altogether unsatisfactory picture'—'your Stone Building-bricks are the favourite of my children. Their other and much more expensive toys are now quite neglected.'

These are slight and innocent examples of the German tendency to pack much between the Pronoun or Definite Article and its Noun; here follow some heavier charges: 'we deem it our duty to draw special attention to the exceedingly minute, and yet for children legible designs,' &c.

Considering then the writings and fame of Sir W. Hamilton as the great fortress of the intuitional philosophy in this country, a fortress the more formidable from the imposing character, and the in many respects great personal merits and mental endowments, of the man.—J. S. Mill, *Autobiography*, c. vii.

. . . and I have there described gems which are the only things preserving the memory of the, in their day, wonders of the world, the master-pieces of Canachus, Apelles, Lysippus, and Leochares. —C. W. King, *Early Christian Numismatics*, p. 151.

A young man, with some tints of academical training, and some of the livid lights of a then only incipient Rationalism on his mind. —Edwin Paxton Hood, *Lectures to Students for the Ministry*, 1867.

Finally, it is worth noting that a by no means inconsiderable

number of words expressing an unfavourable or disagreeable idea are of Germanic origin.—Gustave Masson, *French Literature* (S.P.C.K.) 1888, p. 137.

Mr. Freeman has not escaped the wide infection; he writes, 'this seemingly quite unprovoked injury,'—*Norman Conquest*, i. 460. In this crude structure we observe an investing of the Adjective with a quasi-verbal power, producing the effect of a sentence in a sentence, a phenomenon which may be studied to advantage in many German authors, but which, even in the circle of that language itself, is not, I believe, generally considered exemplary.

But this and every other kind of structure is good in its place, and available for those who know how to use it. Nothing can be more fitly said than Lamb's 'The weary and all forspent two-penny postman' in the following quotation:

> In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all forspent two-penny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires.

There is also a fitness about 'a scarcely credible demoralization' in the following:—

> Liable to prompt dismissal as they are for non-success in selling; gaining higher positions as they do in proportion to the quantities of goods they dispose of at profitable rates; and finding that no objections are made to any dishonest artifices they use, but rather that they are applauded for them; these young men display a scarcely credible demoralization.—Herbert Spencer, *The Morals of Trade*.

A modern Germanism which threatened some few years ago to invade our literature, is the substitution of the Perfect Tense for the Preterite. It is difficult to assign or even conjecture a cause why the Germans should have got into this habit, unless it is to be associated with their proneness to multiply words. The Preterite is the tense of *verve*; the Perfect Tense with its auxiliary is feeble and languid in com-

parison. The Strong Verbs in German, as in English, have a glory about the Preterites which Grimm called 'eine Haupt-Schönheit,' a chief beauty of our family of languages; and it might have been expected that a natural pride in this ancestral dignity would have preserved them from such a willing decadence. This degenerate idiom was beginning to get a footing among ourselves, chiefly among those who are driven to write against time; but even they, it appears, have found leisure to reflect, and to eschew the servility of such unworthy imitation. I am almost glad to say that although I remember to have seen many instances in English, I cannot at this moment recover a single one; and I am driven to avail myself of an example from the pen of a German who is writing in English. The example is a little confused, because there is in it a *has* which is quite correct, and it is the infection of this *has* which perhaps induced the next, and so in a measure excuses it. The example is taken from the English Preface to his edition of *Euphues* by Landmann; he says:

> His style and diction are certainly affected, but his language has nevertheless its charms, and has decidedly won the ascendency over Lyly's more artificial extravagance.—p. xxxi.

The feature of German which has more than any other impressed the English imagination is its profusion of Compounds. Whenever German has been caricatured, this is the part selected for exaggeration. And yet this is certainly one of the most advantageous parts of German usage, and it is the part which, above all others, has had a beneficial influence upon our diction. For it is kindred and germane to a native English idiom which has been obscured by our French tastes, and it has awakened us to this error of ours, before, as we may hope, it is too late to repair it. Long before the entrance of German into the scheme of our English education, and when compounds were not (as we might now say) very conspicuous in English diction, the sound sense of Cobbett had led him to observe their value. In his letters to his nephew he said on this part of Grammar:—

> This is an advantage peculiar to our language. It enables us to say much in few words, which always gives strength to language;

and after Clearness, strength is the most valuable quality that writing or speaking can possess. 'The Yorkshiremen flew to arms.' If we could not compound our words, we must say, 'The men of the shire of York flew to arms.' When you come to learn French, you will soon see how much the English language is better than the French in this respect.

But the diffusion of German studies gave a rapid and sometimes rather a headlong impulsion to English compound-making. When Englishmen saw in every German page and almost in every line a terse and muscular expression like Luther's *Menschenkinder* and *Donnerskinder* instead of 'sons of men' and 'sons of thunder,' their native instincts were awakened, and they proceeded to demonstrate that the faculty of compound-making was not exclusively a German privilege. Milton had spoken of 'the waste of waters,' but Kingsley in a description of the sea brought in the compound 'water-waste.' [1]

Our historical disuse of the Compound has been closely connected with our temporary preference for that French idiom which says *plume d'oie* where we say 'goosequill.' The partial atrophy of a most useful function has however been richly compensated for by the correlated evolution of a new device, which is indeed nothing less than a peculiar and most invaluable English idiom. I mean that specially English structure which couples Nouns in a phrase, making a substantive discharge the office of an adjective. Such are: *apple dumpling, Board School, cream cheese, dictionary words, errand boy, field path, garden gate, horse chesnut*, &c. But this feature has already been described sufficiently in the second section of the Chapter on Grammar.

The adjectival function is one in which German is exuberant as compared with English. It is not so much that German has increased in this Part of Speech, as that we have fallen away. Our language is less fertile of Adjectives now than it was in early times; and this may be accounted for (at least in part) by our unique possession of the Nounal Phrase. The same provision which made Compounds less necessary to us, has also had the cognate effect of making us

[1] *Hereward*, c. xxiii. init.

comparatively indifferent to Adjectives. During the past half century our admiration of German learning has caused us to adopt (especially in Bible criticism) adjectival forms unused before, such as *Johannine, Pauline, Petrine.*

Dr. Edwin Abbott has founded (*Expositor*, 1882, iii. 204) on the style of 2 Peter, a new argument against its Petrine origin.—G. Salmon, *Intr. N. T.* p. 626.

With one more instance I will close this list of Germanisms.[1] For so we may (I suppose) from our point of view call any divergency from our standard, even though the innovation may be ours.

The German verb preserves the Active Voice in places where we through classic influence have changed the older structure for a Passive. Where Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, v. 11, says, 'Die bittere Schule dreissigjähriger Erfahrungen änderte seine Ansichten über die Mittel, wie dies Ziel zu erreichen sei . . .' we must bring in a Passive Infinitive, thus: 'The bitter lessons of thirty years' experience changed his views about the means whereby this goal was to be reached.'

Between the path of rigid adherence to the native diction of the English language and the most wanton licence in culling foreign words from every quarter, there are many, almost innumerable grades and stages; but there is no part of the whole range in which a line of demarcation can be instituted. Every one must be guided by his own taste as to what he ventures to import from beyond the acknowledged pale. This however may be said, that the practice of inserting foreign words, Latin, French, or Italian, is much less in use than it formerly was. As to bits of Greek, no uncommon thing to see interspersed in the pages of the seventeenth century, that fashion has almost wholly disappeared. I cannot at this moment recall more than one instance of a good recent writer putting in a word of Greek, and that was a Preface

[1] For we can hardly rank among 'Idioms' that increased readiness to use the Hyphen, which we have learnt from German books, and which displays itself so freely and indiscriminately at a time when the Germans themselves are inclined to discontinue it.

by Mr. M. Arnold about the poetry of Chaucer, where I think he charged him with lack of σεμνότης (seriousness) or something like that. But in the pages of Jeremy Taylor we see Greek pretty often. De Quincey in his *Confessions* describes 'a sort of *noli me tangere* manner, nervously apprehensive of too familiar approach, and shrinking with the sensitiveness of a gouty man from all contact with the οἱ πολλοί':—but this book (the *Confessions*) was written more than seventy years ago.

The piebald fashion of sprinkling English discourse with Latin is very much diminished, yet there are a few words or phrases which seem to retain a sort of privilege, and they pass unchallenged. Such are for example, *à fortiori, à priori, bonâ fide, casus belli, data, ex animo, ex parte, facile princeps, gratis, imperium in imperio, in foro conscientiæ, in situ, maximum, memoriter, minimum, mutatis mutandis, onus probandi, primâ facie, pari passu, pro ratâ, status quo, suo more, verbatim, vice versâ, vivâ voce.*

primâ facie.

In fact, the character of the cuckoo has called forth almost as much strife in ornithological circles as those of Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell among historians. Where it comes from, why it comes from there at all, and why it should insist upon returning to its unknown whereabouts with more of punctuality than characterises most of its proceedings, are or have been in their time the grounds for several very pretty controversies. There is doubtless a strong *primâ facie* case against the domestic ethics of the cuckoo, and the indictment against it has seldom lost in the hands of bird lovers.—*The Morning Post*, April 23, 1889.

When Latin phrases are thus inserted in an English context, they should never share actively in any part of the government of the sentence. In the following quotation the Latin preposition *ante* governs the following English substantive, a contrivance which has a pedantic air, and is unworthy of imitation.[1]

[1] That words received into a new organism leave their grammatical rights behind them is well expressed in words by W. Schlegel, quoted by Trench in *English Past and Present*, Lecture I.:—'Coëunt quidem paullatim in novum corpus peregrina vocabula, sed grammatica linguarum unde petita sunt ratio perit.'

The suppression of the Indian mutiny merely restored the *status quo ante* the great military revolt.

The next quotation is from Clarendon, and here the Latin words exhibit flexional marks of government under the English verb:—like what we sometimes see in the German sentence, but in English it is very unusual.

He was indeed a man of extraordinary parts, a pleasant wit, a great understanding, which pierced into and discerned the purposes of other men with wonderful sagacity, whilst he had himself *vultum clausum*, that no man could make a guess of what he intended. —*History*, vii. 267.

Between these two examples there is an important difference to be noticed. In the former instance the Latin words remain unexplained, and not only so, but the syntactical fusion of the two languages is such that the whole sentence is mystified for the English reader who has no knowledge of Latin.

In the same way there is a certain number of French words and phrases that still are producible, though the ruling code of taste on the whole discountenances foreign words. Among such privileged survivals we may instance: *arrière pensée*, *badinage*, *bête-noire*, *chef* (French cook), *chef-d'œuvre*, *convenance*, *coup d'état*, *cul de sac*, *débonnaire*, *éclat*, *élite*, *en bloc*, *enfant terrible*, *entourage*, *esprit de corps*, *force majeure*, *fracas*, *gourmet*, *impasse*, *laches* (O. F., a law term for neglect, remissness), *littérateur*, *mauvais sujet*, *mauvaise plaisanterie*, *mêlée*, *métier*, *naïveté*, *nuance*, *pose*, *précis*, *prestige*, *raison d'être*, *régime*, *rôle*, *savant*, *surveillance*, *tête-à-tête*, *tour de force*, *une quantité négligeable*, *volte-face*.

In this list I had included *déshabille*, and I have the pleasure of recording my obligation to the Corrector of the Press, for his valuable service in querying the existence of such a noun in the French language. His accurate observation has not only corrected an error, but has also opened my eyes to an unobserved and very curious feature in those linguistic relations which at this point occupy our attention. The word has circulated in English as a French substantive since the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and yet there is not, nor ever was, such a substantive in the French

vocabulary. The participle of the verb *déshabiller* having obtained vogue in English, a noun *dishabille* was made out of it in our usage, which, though entirely a fabric of our own, we continued to exhibit as a foreign word. Dryden did not altogether follow the insular fashion, and his punctiliousness is noticed by Richardson, who says: 'Dryden does not endenizen the word.' The passage which he quotes runs thus:

> Queens, and persons of the first quality, whom you would make appear majestical, are not to be too negligently dressed, or in *dishabillée*, no more than old men.—*On Dufresnoy.*

But even Dryden has not kept the entire French form; he has anglicized the first syllable; for the substitution of the Latin for the French vowel in that syllable being made in compliance with English habits of orthography, was really anglicizing. Nothing can be more unskilful than the recent corrective by which it has become the fashion to write *déshabille*, as if by that we restored its original nature, which we do not. The word is irremediably estranged from its source; it is not French, and cannot be made so. The peculiarity of its situation consists in this, that it has never acquired the reputation of being English, although it is not, and never was French. I expect that it will amuse and interest my readers to find that French of Stratford-atte-Bowe is not yet an extinct species among us.[1] In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were in England many old French words, some distorted and all antiquated, which had been French once, but were so no longer; and such words were used as decorations of their English speech by those who, like Chaucer's Prioresse, studied the old-fashioned airs of politeness:

> And French she spak ful fayre and fetisly,
> After the scole of Stratford atte bowe,
> For French of Paris was to hir unknowe.

When a foreign phrase has become very familiar in English discourse, it is apt to get translated, and then the original

[1] The word *levée* seems to be another genuine instance of the same insular dialect. It is not French of any date, but an English improvement upon the verb (or substantive) *lever*, getting up in the morning.

falls into disuse. It is rare to see *un fait accompli*, ever since somebody was bold enough to substitute for it the vernacular equivalent 'an accomplished fact,' the latter having taken its place as a recognized English phrase.

Of Italian too there are a few chartered expressions that may bespangle an English context: such are, *ben trovato, con amore, dilettante, dolce far niente, fiasco, gusto, in petto, sotto voce, staccato, torso, virtuoso.*

There are no German words or phrases that are of current use in English prose. Mr. M. Arnold has introduced *Zeit-Geist* and *Aberglaube* into his discourse, and has made them familiar to the general eye by repetition, but it cannot be said that he has won anything like currency for them. There is no saying, however, what may come to pass, now that German has attained so recognized a position in the educational sphere. I observe the following example in an anonymous review.

One sometimes wonders how the literary mind can find time to amuse itself with a *Harrietfrage* while there is a *Theodorafrage* to grapple with.—*The Guardian*, January 1, 1890.

And it is just in its inceptive stages that such a usage carries with it most of novelty and originality.

The facts given are these. The habits of the male and female cuckoo, one ranging over a limited space, the other from space to space; the rich feeding thus secured; the sexual prodigality; the vicarious incubation. Professor Eimer's explanation is one which derives the characteristic laying habit from a reflecting act to which the ancestral bird was moved by the conflict of pleasure with maternal cares. The following would be ours, and perhaps Darwin's explanation. An ancestral bird, the ancestor of cuckoos, through causes not at present traced, laid some out of her many eggs, *by accident* as we say, in another bird's nest. This hen being such as to do this thing, *all* her offspring, wherever reared, were slightly more fitted than other birds to do the like. This offspring was numerous, for more broods than one were reared at the expense (in sitting and feeding) of only one. This tiny sub-variety was already at an advantage in the struggle for existence among *ur*-cuckoos. —*The Guardian*, May 28, 1890; 'Prof. Eimer's *Organic Evolution*,' W. Cunningham.

Sometimes it is useful to the argument to put a word or phrase forward in a strange language, in order to fix the reader's gaze upon it. Mr. M. Arnold has repeatedly made good and effective use of beacon-words or beacon-phrases, and not unfrequently such beacons have been rendered more conspicuous by a French or German garb. Thus:

Suppose we take the department of letters. It is interesting to lay out in one's mind the ideal line of study to be followed by all who have to learn Latin and Greek. But it is still more interesting to lay out the ideal line of study to be followed by all who are concerned with that body of literature which exists in English, because this class is so much more numerous amongst us. The thing would be, one imagines, to begin with a very brief introductory sketch of our subject; then to fix a certain series of works to serve as what the French, taking an expression from the builder's business, call *points de repère*,—points which stand as so many natural centres, and by returning to which we can always find our way again, if we are embarrassed; finally, to mark out a number of illustrative and representative works, connecting themselves with each of these *points de repère*. In the introductory sketch we are amongst generalities, in the group of illustrative works we are amongst details; generalities and details have, both of them, their perils for the learner. It is evident that, for purposes of education, the most important parts by far in our scheme are what we call the *points de repère*. To get these rightly chosen and thoroughly known is the great matter. For my part, in thinking of this or that line of study which human minds follow, I feel always prompted to seek, first and foremost, the leading *points de repère* in it.'—*Johnson's Lives of the Poets*, p. ix.

In writings of a dramatic character, the use of Dialect is sometimes very effective in illustration of local characteristics.

But finally, after a period of quiet and gradual decay, the ruin of Long Whindale chapel had become a quick and hurrying ruin that would not be arrested. When the rotten timbers of the roof came dropping on the farmers' heads, and the oak benches beneath offered gaps the geography of which had to be carefully learnt by the substantial persons who sat on them, lest they should be overtaken by undignified disaster; when the rain poured in on the Communion Table and the wind raged through innumerable mortarless chinks, even the slowly-moving folk of the valley came to the conclusion

that 'summat 'ull hev to be deun.' — Mrs. Humphrey Ward, *Robert Elsmere*, Book i. c. 2.

And if there is occasionally a place for a homely provincialism, the same is true also even of such words and phrases as may approach very near to the 'slang' abhorred of Hallam. In the following quotation, the insertion of the vulgar word *nudge* is not merely irreprehensible, it is a forcible and happy stroke.

There are staminate plants in literature, that make no fine show of fruit, but without whose pollen, quintessence of fructifying gold, the garden had been barren. Emerson's mind is emphatically one of these, and there is no man to whom our æsthetic culture owes so much. The Puritan revolt had made us ecclesiastically, and the Revolution politically independent, but we were still socially and intellectually moored to English thought, till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and the glories of blue water. No man young enough to have felt it can forget, or cease to be grateful for, the mental and moral *nudge* which he received from the writings of his high-minded and brave-spirited countryman.—J. R. Lowell, *My Study Windows*, ed. Garnett; p. 141.

Equally happy, and even more humourous is *bother* in the next example.

The bother with Mr. Emerson is that, though he writes in prose, he is essentially a poet. If you undertake to paraphrase what he says, and to reduce it to words of one syllable, you will make as sad work of it as the good monk with his analysis of Homer in the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*. We look upon him as one of the few men of genius whom our age has produced, and there needs no better proof of it than his masculine faculty of fecundating other minds. Search for his eloquence in his books and you will perchance miss it, but meanwhile you will find that it has kindled all your thoughts. For choice and pith of language he belongs to a better age than ours, and might rub shoulders with Fuller and Browne—though he does use that abominable word *reliable*. His eye for a fine, telling phrase that will carry true is like that of a backwoodsman for a rifle; and he will dredge you up a choice word from the mud of Cotton Mather himself. A diction at once so rich and so homely as his I know not where to match in these days of writing by the page; it is like homespun cloth-of-gold.—J. R. Lowell, *My Study Windows*, ed. R. Garnett; pp. 153, 154.

In the utilizing of slang, by giving it an artistic value, American literature seems to enjoy a peculiar prerogative. Mr. Bryce in his American sojourn has with a natural sympathy caught the knack of it, and in his recent work on the American Commonwealth he has turned it to good account.

run.

Part iii. contains a sketch of this party system, and of the men who 'run' it; topics which deserve and would repay a fuller examination than they have received, even in America, or than my limits permit me to bestow.—J. Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. i. p. 8.

cussedness.

Why then has the regular procedure for amendment [to the Constitution of the United States] proved, in practice, so hard to apply? Partly, of course, owing to the inherent disputatiousness and perversity (what the Americans call 'cussedness') of bodies.—Vol. i. p. 487.

tinkering.

Ought the process of change to be made easier? say by requiring only a bare majority in Congress, and a two-thirds majority of States? American Statesmen think not. A swift and easy method would not only weaken the sense of security which the rigid Constitution now gives, but would increase the troubles of current politics by stimulating a majority in Congress to frequently submit amendments to the States. The habit of mending would turn into the habit of 'tinkering.'—Vol. i. p. 490.

steals, putting through, owner.

Or they were anxious above all things to pass some local measure on which their constituents were set, and they found they could not win the support of other members except by becoming accomplices in the jobs or 'steals' which these members were 'putting through.' Or they gained their seat by the help of some influential man or powerful company, and found themselves obliged to vote according to the commands of their 'owner.'—Vol. ii. p. 163.

log-rolling, see, blackmailing, scallawag.

The corrupt member has several methods of making gains. One, the most obvious, is to exact money or money's worth for his

vote. A second is to secure by it the support of a group of his colleagues in some other measure in which he is personally interested, as for instance a measure which will add to the value of land near a particular city. This is 'log-rolling,' and is the most difficult method to deal with, because the milder forms are scarcely distinguishable from that legitimate give and take which must go on in all legislative bodies. A third is blackmailing. A member brings in a bill either specially directed against some particular great corporation, or a group of corporations. He intimates privately that he is willing to 'see' the directors or law agents of the corporation, and is in many cases bought off by them. Even in the North-Western States there is usually a group of such 'scallawag' members, who, finding the $300 they receive insufficient, increase their legislative income by levying this form of taxation upon the companies of the State.—Vol. ii. p. 164.

cinching = drawing tight the girths of a horse.

But the main underlying spirit of the new instrument [New Constitution for California] was an attack upon capital under the specious name of opposition to monopolies. To use an expressive Californian phrase, capital, and especially accumulated capital, wherever it was found, was to be 'cinched.'—Vol. iii. p. 239.

The Americans have given to slang that measure of respectability, which is inseparable from practical usefulness. But not all the new American words are by any means to be classed in the category of slang. Some there are which have innate in them a true parliamentary dignity. Let us muster a few examples.

placate.

The convention which selects the party candidates usually gives the nomination to this post [Vice-President of U.S.] to a man in the second rank, sometimes as a consolation to a disappointed candidate for the presidential nomination, sometimes to a friend of such a disappointed candidate in order to 'placate' his faction, sometimes as a compliment to an elderly leader who is personally popular.—J. Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. i. p. 66.

justiciable.

Offences against Federal Statutes are justiciable in Federal Courts, and punishable under Federal authority. There is no Federal Common Law of Crimes.—*Id.* Vol. i. p. 238.

magnetism.

What a party wants is not a good President but a good candidate. . . . Many things have to be considered. The ability of the statesman, the length of time he has been before the people, his oratorical gifts, his 'magnetism' (personal attractiveness), his family connections, his face and figure, the purity of his private life, his 'record' (the chronicle of his conduct) as regards integrity —all these are matters needing to be weighed.—*Id.* Vol. ii. p. 550.

In a vast country like America it will occasionally happen that local peculiarities arise, but with the progressively centralizing tendency of literature these will become less frequent. I speak of such a strange turn as that which is given to the word *disinterested*, in the following examples. They are quoted by the Rev. James Fraser (afterwards Bishop of Manchester) in his *Report* (as Commissioner) *on the Common-School System of America*, 1866.

As long as you keep pulling apart, disagreeing with each other, and allowing yourself to be so disinterested in your school, just so long must you expect it to suffer.——There are altogether too many fault-finding ones, disinterested ones, and all-knowing ones in this district for young teachers to contend with.——Recollect that union is the greatest support of your schools, and that disunions, contentions, and disinterestedness, all serve to destroy their prosperity. —*Nineteenth Rhode Island Report*, pp. 120, 123.

There is a little phrase which has been lately pushing to the front, and which is, I suppose, to be credited to our American cousins. The phrase 'at that' seems to have had a commercial origin, and to be a compendious way of saying 'at that price, at that rate,' as these phrases are used in buying and selling. The book in which I first observed it was a volume of Sermons by Mr. H. Ward Beecher, and that is my only reason for ranking it among Americanisms. A more recent example of it occurs in a leading article dating from London.

at that.

I know a great many young men who will be good for nothing. What is the matter? They are moth-eaten. The eagle will not eat them. They are not in danger of buzzards or serpents. Still less are they in danger of lions. They will not die from an ass's kick.

They will be eaten of worms, and by moths at that—little insignificant faults, so small that they are ashamed of a minister that will spend his time and breath in talking about them.—Published by Sampson Low, 1870; p. 199.

When the process is complete—this preliminary process—the pioneer farmer is ready for the next stage, which is that of seed-planting. It is not smooth sward that his plough is now to turn—no mellow field, which it is a pleasure to plough; it is rough soil, full of the green stumps of trees but just disappeared. And, worse than this, roots are coiled, and netted, and matted all over the ground, and all through it; and the furrow must be shallow; and only in spots can it be made at that, and very imperfect at the best—wretchedly crooked; but yet there is a furrow skimmed through the field that shall be some sort of refuge for seed.—*Id.* p. 505.

The first graduated mechanism for measuring the flight of time was that made in 999 by Gerbert, who was afterwards raised to the Papal Throne under the name of Sylvester I. But this arrangement, and most of those that followed, were clumsy clocks at the best, and very rude ones at that.—*The Standard*, January 14, 1880.

Such examples do nothing to diminish the truth of Mr. Freeman's contention for the essential unity of American English with our English here in the old country. When in 1881 Mr Freeman was lecturing in New England, at the Lowell Institute, he was reported by a Boston newspaper to have spoken in one of his lectures substantially as follows.

That the English on both sides of the Atlantic are the same, speaking the same language, is a proposition concerning which I would not pause to speak at all, were it not that it has been charged that the languages of the two countries are different. I admit that there are some minor differences in accent and voice, but I claim that these are all. In proof of this alleged difference this illustration has been used, that what the British call a shop, the American calls a store; that what the former call a railway carriage or coach the latter calls a railroad car. Now, in regard to the first illustration, I can conceive that, in the days of the settlement of New England, there were essential differences in the two things; that the American place for the sale of goods was more really a store than a shop, and that it was called a store because that was the best name for it. I could enlarge the list by naming words which I have heard expressing some little differences, but I have heard no words which imply a different language. The only word I have heard since

coming to New England, which was at all unintelligible to me, is the word 'rare' as applied to meat not sufficiently cooked; and, on my speaking of it, a gentleman of your city convinced me that it had the excellent authority of Dryden.—*Daily Evening Traveller*, October 24, 1881.

It is rare to hear an American gentleman of the first quality and education use a word or phrase which is un-English. Among these rare exceptions may be named, an occasional use of the verb *to guess* where we should not employ it. But the most marked thing is their singularly frequent use of *quite:* as, 'quite a quantity'—'quite a time' &c. It may be compared to the Scotch habit of often introducing the adverb 'fully.'

A very old maxim warns us to avoid with the greatest caution all unconventional expressions. Little thought is required to show us the reason of this precept. There is an unpleasant appearance of egotism in the conduct of a writer who prefers unusual or unrecognized words to those which are in daily currency. Special occasions may justify departure from the general rule; but a wanton infringement of it can only be justified by brilliant success. As a rule the over-ambitious effort defeats its own end. A writer desires to be expressive and incisive and to arrest attention; the chances are that he incurs an ignominious failure. The words most used are those which from their well-established associations are best qualified to impart distinct outline and to give body to discourse. When a man has made a great reputation he may take liberties. Sydney Smith conveys the idea of 'such a goose' by the phrase 'so anserous,' but in this and many similar freaks he is not to be imitated.

Can any be so anserous as to suppose that the faculties of young men cannot be exercised, and their industry called into proper action because Mr. Hamilton teaches, in three or four years, what has (in a more vicious system) demanded seven or eight?—*Hamilton's Method of Teaching Languages.*

When a great historian like Mr. Freeman introduces such strange terms as 'unlaw' and 'unrede,' he not only exercises a prerogative which he has earned by his own ability and toil,

but he also seeks to impart to his narrative a tinge of the peculiar colouring of the time. Such words are taken direct from his originals.

It has been maintained that the censure of foreign idiom as un-English has something unreasonable about it, for if such idioms had not been freely imported, our language could never have become the comprehensive instrument which it now is. The fact is unquestionable, but the inference is weak. As reasonably might it be argued that because a growing boy could eat apples and nuts and raw turnips, and thrive upon such fare, the same individual could digest crude victuals at every subsequent stage of his life! There are times and seasons in the economy of language quite as truly as in the physiology of animal life. The English Language has had its omnivorous period, or rather periods, in which it has taken in foreign nutriment to the verge of satiety. We have already more variety of phrase than we can well find employment for, and the demand of the present time is rather that we should work up what we have than import more raw material.

The best advice that can be given on this head to a young writer is to be content with simple and genuine English, and not to covet that sort of distinction which may be attained by the employment of turns of speech that are out of the common way. It would not be true to say that a foreign word or idiom is inadmissible, but it should not be admitted without pretty good certainty of its justification, by reason of the clear gain in distinctness or force or charm; and this calls for circumspection and a sound judgment.

Enough has now been said about particular idioms; let us return for a moment to the consideration of native Idiom in the abstract. This it is that gives to discourse a local and national tint; it is as the perfume of a field after showers in spring. This it is which gives raciness to the Sagas, and renders them fascinating in spite of their baldness. It is the lack of this which makes most German prose sound hollow and dead, and makes it hopeless for a foreigner ever to get any further with it. Exceptions must be made in favour of certain works, Grimm's *Kindermärchen* for one. But here we

see what it is that kills idiom; it is crushed out by weight of learning. German prose has not had fair play; it has been fed not upon its own natural pabulum, the native poetry, but upon foreign imitation. The German poetry, as a whole, has a rich native idiom; the prose has none.

And of a piece with this is the fact that in our own scholastic period, idiom grew rather pale. It is, indeed, not absent in Hooker or even in Clarendon; but in the latter it is much diluted. It is one of Milton's characteristics that classical as he is in his prose, there is still a rich tint of idiom. But for the finest exhibition of it we must go to the writers before and after the great Latin upheaval, on the one side Malory and Fortescue, on the other Bunyan, Defoe, Pepys, Addison. A writer of the eighteenth century, whose idiom is almost pungent, is Joseph Butler. The utmost pomp of Dr. Johnson, steeped though he is in classicism, could not banish idiom from his long-robed movement.

The first conspicuous example of its absence in a great writer is furnished by Gibbon, who made his home in France and formed his diction upon a French basis. In our own day the graceful prose of Mr. Hamerton has something of the same characteristic, although in other respects it is the very opposite of Gibbon's. These writers, so diverse otherwise, may be brought under one category in respect of idiom. In both of them the atmosphere (if I may so speak) is French rather than English. And we sometimes see foreigners who select English prose for their literary medium; their writings may be perfect in grammatical structure and artistic sequence; they may be and often are English in everything but that which I have called the English atmosphere. Such writers move us to prognosticate a new type of literary English. Perhaps the time is not very far distant when all educated men, wherever born, will be able to express themselves in English prose; and then will appear (perhaps) a wider literature in a new world-English which will bear the same relation to vernacular English as Hellenistic Greek bore to that which flourished upon Hellenic soil.[1] The diction of Polybius, the writer who stands at the

[1] A feature which is often observable in Hellenistic English (especially in its commercial efforts) is the uncomfortable use of Symbolic phrases. In the

head of the Hellenistic literature, is characterized by Mr. Strachan Davidson in *Hellenica* as 'a cosmopolitan language, without character and without idiom.'

The spirit of inner sympathy with native Idiom leans towards the possibilities of 'word-creation,' commonly called Onomatopœia. An ideal author would be one who had perfect use of his language in all its parts, powers, and possibilities, including the power to put forth new words at need. We must never give in to the doctrine that there was a time and a place in which and at which 'Roots' were founded;—as if once for all the regulation-quantity of words and word-making licences had been issued for the furnishing forth of the field of all future literature. To this doctrine we must never succumb until such time as the evidence for it shall have attained to demonstration; a time which at present shews no symptoms of drawing any nearer. On this head I would call the reader's attention to some very weighty and profound observations by Dr. Murray.

The B-words are full of problems, which have baffled the efforts of all investigators: every one of these has received a fresh and independent investigation, in which assistance has been rendered by some of the first living philologists; and the result has been the discovery of new facts, or the elimination of old errors, in regard to many words. In addition to the words of Old English and Old French origin, and the numerous terms of more recent adoption and more or less known source, as *beltane, blatant, bog, boomerang boor, bosh, boycott*, this Part contains an extraordinary number of words of unknown or uncertain derivation. Many of these have no kin in other languages, but stand quite alone in English, and it cannot be doubted, are more or less recent creations of English itself—instances of *onomatopœia* in its true etymological sense of 'name-

annexed specimen of Germanical English, the phrase 'of course' sits very uneasily in its place. We see that it was intended somehow to add force to the assertion, but its actual effect is quite the reverse. It distracts attention. An Englishman would never have put it there, or if he had, he would have struck it out in revision. We see that the writer of the sentence was a stranger to the associations with which English experience has surrounded the usage of this symbolical phrase. 'Whoever wishes to give a fair trial to fortune and is desirous of a prompt decision of such an experiment, there is of course no better opportunity than the lottery of Hamburg, endowed with the most splendid prizes and possessed of universal reputation and favour.'

creation.' For B contains many illustrations of the fact that has of late years powerfully impressed itself upon philological students, that the creative period of language, the epoch of 'roots' has never come to an end. The 'origin of language' is not to be sought merely in a far-off Indo-European antiquity, or in a still earlier pre-Aryan yore-time; it is still in perennial process around us. A literary language, with its more accessible store of words already in use and sufficient for all ordinary requirements, its more permanent memories and traditions, its constant appeals to an authoritative precedent—'Where did you find that word? Is it in the Dictionary? Is it English at all? Can you cite it from any of the masters of English prose?'—is hostile to word-creation. The new word is apt to die almost as soon as born, ashamed of its own newness, ashamed of the italics or inverted commas which apologize for its very existence, or question its legitimacy. But such is not the case with language in its natural state, where words are estimated simply as they serve their purpose of communicating the thought or feeling of the moment, and where memory and tradition, and precedent are only contributories to the fulfilment of this function. The unwritten dialects, and to some extent, even slang, and colloquial speech, approach in character to language in its natural state, aiming only at being expressive, and treating memory and precedent as ministers, not as masters. In the local dialects, then, in slang, in colloquial use, new vocables and new expressions may at any time be abruptly brought forth to serve the needs of the moment, in accordance with feelings of inherent natural fitness, of imitative suggestiveness, or of subtle instinctive analogy with groups of words or parts of words already familiar. Some of these pass at length from colloquial, into epistolary, journalistic, and, finally, into general literary use, or from the colloquy of the novel into the literary composition of the novelist, and are registered in the dictionary as 'new words' the origin of which is searched for as vainly in the 'word-hoard' of Old English speech, or even the fullest vocabulary of Indo-European roots, as in a school-manual of Latin and Greek roots and affixes. The dialect glossaries abound in words of this kind; and among those to be found in these pages, *bam*, *bamboozle*, *bang*, *bash*, *bilk*, *binge*, *birl*, *birsle*, *birr*, *blab*, *blabber*, *blad*, *blare*, *blash*, *blatter*, *blear*, *bleb*, *blight*, *blizzard*, *blob*, *blore*, *blot*, *blotch*, *blowse*, *blub*, *blubber*, *bludgeon*, *bluff*, *blunder*, *blunt*, *blur*, *blurt*, *bluster*, *bluther*, *blutter*, *bob* (in some senses), *bodge*, *bogus*, *boodle*, *boom* (in some senses), *bore*, *bosh*, *bother*, *bounce*, *box* (a blow), are words which cannot be traced to any ancient 'roots,' but are, for the most part

at least, examples of more or less recent word-creation.—*A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 'Prefatory Note to Part iii.'

All Englishmen who aspire to be authors should, if possible, write idiomatically; and to that end they should cultivate conversation with rustics in their country rambles; they should read books in Old English, and sometimes translate them to and fro; they should make themselves acquainted with those poets in whose pages the genuine native aroma is stored up; such are Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare. For in the breath of the native idiom there is as it were a moral fragrance, akin to the love of home and domestic faith;—it is in discourse what the tenderness of natural piety is in the beauty of human character.

CHAPTER VIII

OF EUPHONY

Prose has a music of its own, as truly as Poetry has. Conflicting evidence of William Hazlitt and Reginald Pecock. Euphony a motive in some grammatical details. Effect of the Hyphen on Rhythm. Danger of Monotony—A book in monosyllables—Short words and long words—Example of Mr. Bright. Repetition of sounds—Alliteration—Syllable-clashing—Word-clashing: Prepositions, Conjunctions—Collision of verbs. Variety of Sentence essential to Euphony—Analogy between Music and literary Euphony—Handel—Musical relations of Poetry and Prose.

. . . when the ear and mind are pleas'd together, we are far more easily convinced, than when a part of us is still dissatisfied. Nor can I imagine it will be hard to conclude how great a deference must be had to the ear in the use of words, if we reflect, that the very same words differently placed, move and engage with a very different influence. And experience teaches us, that such is the connection between sense and reason in man, that harmony, tho' no part of the argument, is commonly a part of the persuasiveness: so willing we are to believe, that what pleases, is true. Nor is this to be understood only of reciting or speaking, but also of writing. For the eye calls upon the ear, if I may use the expression, in the way to the understanding: and the sound of the words, tho' you read them in silence, gets as soon to the ear, as the sense to the mind.—John Constable, *Reflections upon Accuracy of Style* (1731), Dialogue iii.

ALTHOUGH it is true that Poetry has grown out of singing, and Prose has developed itself from the daily exercise of common speech, yet this does not hinder but that Prose has, or ought to have, a sweetness of sound and a music of its own. Indeed, it may almost be said to follow from its origin, for all kindly speech has a manifest tendency towards some charm of tone and beauty of rhythm.

And therefore I think that William Hazlitt, in the passage which I am about to quote, was very far from right. His theme leading him to extol Poetry, and being in high raptures over poetic modulation, he, seeking a dark foil to set off his

splendours, ran into the following reckless depreciation of Prose.

On the contrary, there is nothing either musical or natural in the ordinary construction of language. It is a thing altogether arbitrary and conventional. Neither in the sounds themselves, which are the voluntary signs of certain ideas, nor in their grammatical arrangements in common speech, is there any principle of natural imitation, or correspondence to the individual ideas, or to the tone of feeling with which they are conveyed to others. The jerks, the breaks, the inequalities and harshness of prose, are fatal to the flow of a poetical imagination, as a jolting road or a stumbling horse disturbs the reverie of an absent man. But poetry makes these odds all even. It is the music of language, answering to the music of the mind, untying, as it were, 'the secret soul of harmony.' —*Lectures on the English Poets*, i.

Very differently thought Reginald Pecock,[1] in the fifteenth century; for it is of Prose and not of Poetry that he is thinking, where he says:

Fro eeldist daies contynueli hidirto men weren woned forto speke and write her wordis not oonli in treuthe, but also therwith togidere forto speke and write tho wordis in sum gaynes and bewte, or in sum deliciosite; and into this eende and purpos thei vsiden certein colouris of rethorik, that with hem her spechis schulde be the more lusti, and thei ordeyneden summe certeyn figuris rennyng therwith forto excuse tho colourid spechis fro vntrouthe, and summe othere certein figuris forto excuse tho spechis fro vncongruyte of gramer: euen riȝt as menn fro eeldist daies hiderto weren woned

[1] The name of Reginald Pecock gives me occasion to recall to memory that brilliant epoch in the history of Oriel College, which Mr. Shadwell, who knows the history of the College best, defines by the years 1425–1475. Reginald Pecock was one of five Fellows of the College who in that interval became bishops. Carpenter b. Worcester 1444, Lyhert b. Norwich 1446, Hals b. Lichfield 1459, Praty b. Chichester 1438, Pecock b. first of St. Asaph 1444, and then of Chichester 1450–1457. Three of these, Carpenter, Lyhert, Hals, were Provosts, and these three, besides a fourth, Sampson, who came next in succession, were long gratefully remembered as benefactors to the College. Another great benefactor (c. 1445) was John Franke, Master of the Rolls. The stream of endowment continued to flow towards Oriel for another half century, during which time Shenington was added by Smyth b. Lincoln, Visitor of the College, and Swanswick with other estates by Dudley, formerly Fellow. In the century 1425–1525 the College acquired its most valuable possessions; all that came before or since being insignificant in comparison.

not oonli forto ete her mete, but also therwith forto ete her mete in deliciose maner ; and therfore thei ordeyneden spicis and saucis forto therwith make her mete the more sauori and more plesant.—*The Repressor* (about 1450), Part II. c. 18. (Rolls Series, vol. i. p. 255.)

The little changes that are slowly but constantly taking place in the progress of language, are largely determined by motives of Euphony. It was by an instinct of euphony that the genius of the Language was led to change *an horse, an house*, which prevailed in 1611, to *a horse, a house*, which alone are admissible now. The same principle of the influence of sound is yet more observable in cases where the rule is kept to the ear while it is broken to the eye, as in *an heir, a University*

The same principle manifests itself in the variation of the Relatives *that* and *which*. The modern Relative *which* is now the dominant one, but when there is need of a series of Relatives the ancient *that* is called in to prevent anything like a wearisome iteration. No language can be more sensitive than ours is to anything like an approach to a jangle of sounds, such as would result from a continued series of *which* . . . *which* . . . *which*. Long ago this was felt, and we may find many proofs of it in our Bible. Thus in Matthew xxii. 21, without any hint in the Greek, we see these two Relatives used interchangeably ;—'the things which are Cæsar's . . . the things that are God's.' And to pass to writing of a different class, the following quotation from a novel by Messrs. Besant and Rice affords an illustration of the same principle.

He inclined rather to the low humour which makes men enjoy Fielding's *Tom Jones* or Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*—works full, no doubt, of a coarse vitality which some men like, but quite wanting in the delicate shades of feeling that commend an author to the delicacy of gentlewomen.—*The Chaplain of the Fleet*, Chap. xv.

Whatever power of variation a language possesses is a provision made in the interest of Euphony. The power of variation is the result of that accumulation which naturally follows when new forms of expression are admitted and the old are not discarded. By this natural process we have acquired the alternative choice of two Relatives, *that* and *which*. Every new faculty of variation is an addition to our means of

Euphony. The English language has of all languages the greatest range of variety, and this is a great advantage in the direction of Euphony.

Another instance of the kind may be seen in the large choice we have for the expression of Genitival and Adjectival relations. We can say either 'cup of gold' or 'golden cup' or 'gold cup';—'style of Johnson' or 'Johnson's style';—'crop of wheat' or 'wheat crop'; and that which determines the selection of one or other of these formulæ is the consideration of Euphony. In Genesis xliv. 2, we read:—'in the sack's mouth of the youngest.' Here we see within so short a space the English and the French Genitives. How trailing would it be if we were forced to say:—'in the mouth of the sack of the youngest.' And yet there are cases in which a series of French Genitives may have an excellent effect, as in Gen. xlvii. 9: 'The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the land of their pilgrimage.' The advantage is not always with variation, though it generally is so. See what a gain to melody is the transition from Flexion to Phrase in the following:—'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.' We are better provided with material of variation than the French are, and accordingly we have a language more fitted for poetry than theirs is;—that their prose cannot be said to suffer on this account is one of the mysterious subtleties of that incomparable instrument.

The ear plays an important part in the exposition of language, not only as spoken, but also as written. There are several illustrations of this, but one of the most simple is that in which the question arises—Hyphen or no Hyphen? When two substantives are in qualifying juxta-position, it may be asked—Do they or do they not constitute a Compound? This is a question, not for the mind only, but also for the ear. There is a difference in sound between 'stronghold' and 'strong hold,' between 'highway' and 'high way.'[1]

[1] Many places in the Revision of 1885 this change has been made; e.g. Isaiah lxii. 10, 'cast up, cast up the high way,' where 1611 had 'highway.'

The misplacing of a Hyphen is a very ordinary error, and one that has perhaps been more common of late years, since German (with its compounding habits) has been included among the elements of English education. In the fourth Volume of Newman's Sermons (edition of 1868) page 20, we find 'His loving-mercy extends over all his works.' This hyphen is wrong.

In the following quotation 'Copyright-Act' is an example of a hyphen misplaced.

The Bodleian also stands in this remarkable position that, if there were no Copyright-Act at all, it would still be entitled under a grant from the Stationers' Company to Sir Thomas Bodley, to a copy of every book first printed, or reprinted with additions, by a member of the Company.—*The Bodleian Library in* 1882–7.

On the day in which I am writing this, I have received a letter containing a misplaced hyphen in the following sentence:—'I used some very plain-speaking with him.' The writer is an Oxford man and a cathedral dignitary, active in his habits and exact, and this hyphen was due, as I apprehend, not to haste or neglect, but rather to an excess of precision.

I will add an example or two in which the Hyphen is a true musical note:

garrison-air.

Dandoins stands with folded arms, and what look of indifference and disdainful garrison-air a man can, while the heart is like leaping out of him.—T. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, II. iv. 6.

side-saddle.

In the abstract, there is, we confess, little to be said against women copying men in the matter of riding. Antiquarians have shown that the side-saddle is a comparatively modern invention, and that at one time an Englishwoman who wanted to mount a horse invariably rode astride. We do not suppose that the sky will fall, or that women will lose all the best qualities which distinguish their sex, if the present distinction between the male and female plan of riding is done away with. At the same time, we are bound to declare that if some extraordinary and unaccountable access of frenzy should suddenly seize all the horsewomen of England, and make them copy their fathers', brothers', and husbands' saddles, we should

very much regret the change. In the first place, as we have said above, the alteration would be singularly unfortunate from the point of view of beauty. At present, all women, tall or short, stout or thin, can manage to look fairly well on horseback, so naturally graceful is the attitude, and in such becoming lines does the drapery of the habit flow.—*The Standard*, May 31, 1890.

Although it is true of the great bulk of all prose writing that it is produced by a writer who writes in silence to be perused by readers who read in silence, yet it is also true at the same time that it contains a voice, and that the sound of it is essential to its quality and a chief element in its success. The reader not only sees, but consciously or unconsciously he also hears; and it is upon the latter sense that his perception of harmony and much of his pleasure are based. There is a demand that the modulation and the cadences shall chime in with the play of thought. And therefore the greatest elasticity is desirable in the sequences of words, and this depends upon a large and various supply of all sorts and sizes, and upon skill in selection and combination. Hence the utility of that large choice of equivalents which is described in the First Chapter. No rigid rules about Saxon English, no affectation for short words, should be allowed to interfere with this supreme requirement, namely, that your prose must have a natural and musical rhythm, must be melodious and harmonious. Some twenty years ago there appeared a Sermon written 'in words of one syllable only: By a Manchester Layman.' It jumped with the wide-spread feeling of mutiny against the fulsomeness of dictionary words, and it was (for the moment) approved and admired accordingly. It was done very well, perhaps almost as well as such a feat could be performed. But the author aspires too high when in his Preface he censures the 'growing disposition in many ministers of religion to use long and high-sounding words' and then offers this Sermon to shew that 'big words are not necessary for the conveyance of great truths to the minds of the people.' The reader may observe that the Author does not use one-syllable words when off his task-work. This literary feat is really useful, if only as it exhibits the completeness of our monosyllabic vocabulary, in which it is possible without

grammatical violence to write page after page of a sustained discourse: and it is not less useful as shewing how flat and toneless the performance is and must be. Here is the exordium:

All thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord; and Thy saints shall bless Thee.—Psalm cxlv. 10.

He who wrote the Psalm in which our text is found, had great cause to both bless and praise God; for he had been brought from a low state to be a great king in a great land; had been made wise to rule the land in the fear and truth of God; and all his foes were, at the time he wrote, at peace with him. Though he had been poor, he was now rich in this world's goods; though his youth had been spent in the care of sheep, he now wore a crown; and though it had been his lot for a long time to hear the din of war and strife, peace now dwelt round the throne, and the land had rest. But great and good as these things were, they were but one cause of the praise in those grand old Psalms that he wrote, and which have so long been a source of joy to the church of God. He who first wrote the words of our text felt that all these things had come from God, who gives all that is good in this world, and that praise was due to Him at all times; but he felt too, that in the sight of God he was still poor; that in the view of the world to come, he was still a fool; and that he could not by his own strength, quell and put down sin, his first and great foe, that kept up a war in his own breast. He knew the plague of his own heart; he felt how prone he was to break God's law; and that this was sin; and that the end of sin was death. God had shown him this; and had He shown him no more than this, we should not have had this Psalm of praise to speak from: for to be rich, to be wise, and to be a king in this world, will bring no joy, nor peace, nor praise, if a sense of sin lies on the soul.

In the next extract, which is given as being some of the best that could be selected, we see how hard it is for the writer, with such an instrument as he has chosen, to rise with the elevation of his subject or to throw into it that quicker movement which is the natural result and expression of warmth of feeling.

But God kept the best work for the last day. On the sixth day, God made man, for whose use all else had been made. We may with truth say that the sixth day's work was the best; for it is said, God made man like God. All these six days' work are good. They

all show how wise and good is that God in whom we live and move, and they all praise Him day by day. All things that God has made praise Him, from the least fly that is born one day and dies the next, to the huge bird that lives more years than now fall to the lot of man. All praise Him, from the least fish that swims in the sea, to the great whale whose strength is not known. All praise Him, from the mounds in which are shown the strength and skill of the ant, to the high hills that cast forth fire and smoke. All praise Him, from the small sand on the sea shore, to the vast mounts whose tops are out of our sight. All things praise God; from the stars that give light by night, to the sun that gives light by day.

There is no greater foe to Euphony than Monotony. Any strained attempt to write in words of one class, sort, or size, is sure to beget Monotony. Some have resolved to write all in Saxon; others have resolved to avoid polysyllabic words, and both of these have fallen into monotony. An agreeable discourse cannot be written with words all of one or nearly of one length. The ear is offended, though the reader may be reading in silence. A wise admixture of polysyllabic words is necessary in order to produce a pleasing sense of modulation and to ward off a dull and drowsy sameness. There is a fatuity about such efforts, which is the more to be regretted as they have an affinity with that sound natural instinct which draws us towards the native elements of our language. They consort with a vague floating notion that Saxon words are all short, and that short words are all Saxon. He who grudges the polysyllables their due place will never write anything that can be redd aloud or listened to with pleasure; and this void of Euphony will also, as I have said, infest even the silent perusal.

At the same time it is true that some of the sweetest and most melodious diction exhibits a vast preponderance of short and even of monosyllabic words, as, for example, may be seen in the speeches of Mr. John Bright. Only it is a miserable inversion of the right order of thought if any one infers from such results that it is easy to reproduce the same good effect again by dint of packing short words together.

The Euphony of written discourse turns in no small measure upon the note of repetition or non-repetition of the

same sounds. It cannot be said that either of these is right as a rule, or that one is right and the other wrong; it is a matter of taste and discretion and experience. What gives subtlety to the enquiry is this, that it is not merely a melody we seek for the gratification of the ear, but a more highly complex product, a harmony between the movement of language and the thoughts or sentiments of the mental movement. No kind of dogmatic rule can be laid down; but it may be useful to notice a few of the more ordinary instances. Among these one of the most obvious is Alliteration.

Alliteration is an old poetic device, which, since the fourteenth century, has lost its regular function, but still holds a vague place among the properties of poetry. Therefore, on the general grounds assigned in a previous chapter for the exclusion of poetic diction, Alliteration should not be admitted, or at least should not appear at all conspicuous in prose composition. In our earlier literature, before the conditions of Prose were fully ascertained, Alliteration was rather welcomed when it offered itself, and was esteemed as an agreeable ornament. Thus in the *Life of Cardinal Wolsey* by Cavendish:

> It delighted him so much to have the king's pleasant princely presence, that no thing was to him more delectable than to cheer his sovereign lord.

This is now counted among the quaintnesses of antiquity, which are no longer admissible. Indefinite latitude is however accorded for peculiar occasions, and the alliteration in the following sentence may perhaps be justified as appropriate to the theme; but it could not be recommended as a model.

> In the terrible spectacle of a ship on fire they see only a joke, and a chance of imitating the piratical heroes of pernicious literature.—*The Daily News*, July 18, 1879.

The following sentence occurs in an Article on Admiral Coligny, and it describes the agitation of men's minds at the time of the Colloquy of Poissy. The bold alliteration might be defended on the ground of the exciting theme, and further on the ground of excellence in detail of execution, for the sense is not once sacrificed to the sound;—but after all, it must be regarded as no more than a privileged exception, which only

is not censured because it is too good to censure. It still remains true, that Alliteration is not the proper ornament of prose.

Epithet and epigram, satire and sarcasm, pamphlet and pasquinade, flew swiftly from side to side, and no quarter was given in the war of barbed tongues, which smote with unerring precision, and stinging force.—*Quarterly Review*, July 1888, p. 23.

At the same time, it may be said that a certain unobserved employment of Alliteration may be among the elements which conduce to the effect of harmonious sound. The use of it, in a manner so unobtrusive that it is hard to say whether it was designed or accidental, has been observed in some of Macaulay's happiest paragraphs.

There is, however, one situation in which Alliteration may appear quite openly. This is in the occasional apophthegmatic clause, which approaches the nature of Aphorism, and is allowed to be somewhat epigrammatic, and therefore to have some remote affinity to poetry. In the following quotation the last clause affords an example.

Therefore, to say that Church-union is a form, is no disparagement of it;—forms are the very food of faith.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, Vol. iii. Sermon 14.

Repetition of the termination *-ly* is sometimes unpleasant. It is well therefore to be careful about the arrangement of Adverbs, and not prefix any Adverb in *-ly* to an adjective in *-ly*, as where in Lewes's *Life of Goethe*, it is said of the poet's father, that he was 'passionately orderly.' The example now to be quoted from Dr. Mozley has a disturbing effect, and it is typical of the author. There are few modern writers that I have redd more continuously, or with a more perennial delight; and my impression is that whenever I have met with a dissonant sentence, the reiteration of an adverbial termination or some other petty symbol has proved to be the peccant element.

On the contrary, it is only comparatively recently that it was distinctly seen or apprehended.'—J. B. Mozley, *University Sermons*, i.

Here we see Adverbs piled together confusedly so as to

create an aimless and jangling effect. There are, however, times when we cannot without an unnatural effort avoid the construction in which an Adverb qualifies an Adverb. In such conjunctures, it is useful to remember that there is one elder type of Adverb, a form which I have in my *Philology* called the Flat Adverb, an Adverb without a final *-ly*;[1]—and although the gratuitous use of this Adverb is a little too redolent of archaism and high style, yet, upon due occasion, it may be expedient to employ it, as did the skilful writer of a Review of Lady Blennerhassett's *Madame de Staël*, from which I take the following example.

exceeding badly.

Madame de Staël's mother, the daughter of a Swiss pastor, reduced to maintain herself by her own exertions, must have been a singularly attractive young woman. She was very capable, too, of taking her own part; she had a love affair with Gibbon, who seems to have behaved exceeding badly, and who jilted her in spite of her eloquent appeals and her efforts to lure him back to his allegiance. *The Times*, March 16, 1889.

There are three varieties of adverb, the Flat, the Flexional, and the Phrasal, and all three occur within the short space of the following example; and here with the plenitude of expression observe how naturally and beautifully is joined a corresponding amplitude of the wave of modulation:—'he who fair and softly goes steadily forward in a course that points right,'—John Locke, *The Conduct of the Understanding*.

It is well to observe the difference there is in repetition of words; for one sort of repetition is, and another is not, compatible with Euphony. The general principle is, that there should be no discord in the repetition, and that it should not be without point. It is hardly possible to give rules upon which the writer may lean in this matter; he must learn to exercise his own taste and discernment. To this end an example or two may be useful. The way in which *not* is repeated in the following quotation can only be accounted for on the ground of haste and lack of revision.

. . . at a time when it is not easy to say anything which may

[1] *The Philology of the English Tongue*, by J. Earle, §§ 430, 434, and 445.

not have a construction not pleasant to us.—*Edmund Burke to the Marquis of Rockingham*, 1769.

The repetition of *enough* in the following quotation is bad, because it is dull and pointless, being withal very obtrusive.

No man more gathered a general concurrence to his opinion than he; which was the more notable, because his person, and manner of speaking, were ungracious enough; so that he prevailed only by the strength of his reason, which was enforced with confidence enough.—Clarendon, *History*, iv. 122.

In the next quotation, it will be felt that the repetition of *pride* is harmonious in itself and harmonious with the theme.

Feudal Fleur-de-Lys had become an insupportably bad marching-banner, and needed to be torn and trampled: but Moneybag of Mammon (for that, in these times, is what the respectable Republic for the Middle Classes will signify) is a still worse, while it lasts. Properly, indeed, it is the worst and basest of all banners and symbols of dominion among men; and indeed is possible only in a time of general Atheism, and Unbelief in anything save brute Force and Sensualism; pride of birth, pride of office, any known kind of pride, being a degree better than purse-pride.—Thomas Carlyle, *French Revolution*, III. iii. 1.

The contiguous repetition of the same word in discordant grammatical functions will often produce an unpleasant jar. And the finer the shade of distinction between these two unisonous Parts of Speech, the more disagreeable is the collision. It is indeed sometimes more than a crash on the ear, it is a baffling confusion to the mind. In the next quotation, *for* the conjunction follows too close upon the heels of *for* the preposition.

The political imagination of Englishmen centres in their pockets. It was on questions of Supplies that our essential liberties were won. There is no reason to blush for this, for policy, after all, culminates inevitably in finance.

In the next, the symbolic *more* falls upon the ear with a confusing thud, before the sound of the less symbolic and comparatively presentive *more and more* has had time to die away.

And what I say has a meaning for *you*; for, unless I greatly

mistake the signs of the hour here, American life is only the advanced guard of tendencies which are asserting themselves more and more, alongside the more stable life and in the midst of the venerable institutions of this ancient Realm. — Bp. Littlejohn, *Individualism* (1881), p. 21.

In the following quotation from an interesting discourse about American literature, we see 'course' in two powers, one symbolic and one presentive, and they clash awkwardly.

But certainly Peter Parley managed to engage the whole attention of English children at that time, and rendered them considerable service. From that, of course, in the course of reading, I went to Fenimore Cooper, &c.

But even where the Part of Speech is the same, there may still be clashing, if the shades of meaning are different. It is better not to have two phrases in succession which are headed by the self-same preposition, like the *to* . . . *to* of the next quotation; when, as in this case, the aspect of the preposition is changed.

It is one of the most significant differences between the English Revolution of 1688 and the French Revolution of 1789, that the latter was carried through by men devoted, to the verge of fanaticism, to political doctrines, the former by a man who was almost entirely indifferent to them. The Dutchman who wrought the Whig Revolution was in no sense a Whig. — *The Guardian*, October 3, 1888; p. 1470.

As in the old flexional languages it was ungraceful for a verb or a participle, having two regiments, to have both of these relations indicated by the same grammatical Case, so, in the symbolism of modern deflexionized speech, it is required that those Prepositions which have succeeded to the Case-function should continue to respect the old tradition, supported as it is by good and evident reasons of Euphony.

And even when there is no manifest discord either to mind or ear, there may be a repetition incompatible with Euphony. This may happen by the mere idle and pointless recurrence of those sounds which ought not to recur because they ought not to be brought into prominence or notice at all; such are auxiliaries, and generally all symbolic words.

In the following scrap, the auxiliary *has* is a word which ought to do its duty and awake no observation of its presence; but here its too early repetition makes it to be heard in a manner unfavourable to euphony. Also the preposition *by* is too quickly recurrent.

The measure of success which has attended his labours has long been adjudged by his fellow-countrymen, by whom the work is ranked among the very first, &c.

The same preposition should not be quickly repeated, though in the particular case of the preposition *of* it is sometimes hard to avoid it. But anyhow, the same preposition should not be quickly repeated in an altered sense, like *by* and *with* in the following quotations.

Not less striking is the story of the unfortunate pretender Achæus, besieged in the fortress of Sardis by king Antiochus. He was enticed out by night, by a traitorous Cretan named Bolis, who, having received a great sum of money to effect his escape, sold him to Antiochus.—*Hellenica*, p. 413.

Any one of experience with legislative bodies will agree with the view that ignorance and stupidity cause more trouble than bad intentions, seeing that they are the materials on which men of bad intentions play.—J. Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. ii. p. 162, footnote.

And even though there may be nothing discordant in the sense of such prepositions, it is desirable to avoid every unprofitable jingle. In the following quotation from Myers' *Francis Xavier* the ear is teazed with the doubt whether the second *with* is or is not the echo and confirmation of the first.

A single-minded, simple-hearted man: with nothing to influence other men with but that inward force, &c.

The case is different where a preposition gets repeated as a verbal adverb, so that the cumulation is manifest and adds volume to the expression;—in such a case it sometimes happens that a certain quaint satisfaction attends the repetition. Thus:—'of which mocion y was ryght glad to hyre off,'—*Paston Letters*, 222;—'upon the most sceptical principles one can argue upon,'—Joseph Butler, *Analogy*, ad finem.

It is as well to avoid the juxtaposition of two diverse uses of *on*, like that which appears in the next quotation, where *on* the verbal particle is immediately succeeded by *on* the preposition.

The Divine life in the soul is not a detached inward feeling or belief, while our outward life goes on on different rules, but it is a light which becomes visible through its manifestation in single and trivial acts.—Mark Pattison, *Sermons* (1885), p. 253.

In the haste of writing, especially for the daily press, such things will escape the most practised pen; but however natural they may be, and excusable in a leading article, they are none the less available as warnings of a tendency which like some sunken rock should be notified on the chart of the writer. In the next quotation, which is from a leader, the first *certain* is an Indefinite Pronoun, indeed we might almost call it an Article Indefinite; and the second *certain* is an Adjective equivalent to *sure*.

There are certain burning questions which are certain not to be discussed with temper, and wise people, therefore, abstain from discussing them.

Coming now to the Conjunctions, we must particularly notice the proneness of our chief Conjunction *that* to get into a clash. It is an old Demonstrative Pronoun which has been promoted to this conspicuous post. But it was not straight from the function of a Demonstrative that it was moved to the place of the Conjunction; this Symbol had a transition-state as Relative Pronoun, and it was this office which qualified it to become the chief of the Conjunctions. Since it became a Conjunction, it has not ceased to be a Relative Pronoun; but in the exercise of this function it is not without check. As a Conjunction it is quite irreplaceable, there being no equivalent for it and hardly anything that can be called a substitute. The consequent importunateness of this Conjunction has no doubt been the cause why we, more and more sensitive to proximity of recurrence, have formed the habit (so peculiar to English that it might be called an English idiom) of omitting it whenever we like almost. And this 'subintellection' of the unuttered Conjunction may be

regarded as a sort of makeshift substitute for it. This peculiar English idiom has been dictated by motives of Euphony.

Very different are the circumstances of *that* as a Relative Pronoun. In this capacity it has a rival in the more recent *which*, a Relative of Saxon material and Roman mould. By means of this *which*, we prevent the clashing proximity of the one with the other *that*, of the Conjunction with the Pronoun. Sensitiveness on this point seems to be progressing. In the Bible of 1611 we read 'Gather up the fragments that remain that nothing be lost,'—John vi. 12. But in the Revised New Testament of 1881 it stands thus: 'Gather up the broken pieces *which* remain over, that nothing be lost.'

The particular conjunction, however, which is most apt to get into a clash, is the conjunction *but*. In this item the Germans have an advantage over us. They have two words for *but*, not strictly synonymous, but differing with a rational and useful difference. The one (aber) has a large function, and expresses the antithesis of sentence as against sentence; the other (sondern) has a smaller function and subserves the contrast of word or phrase. There is no flaw more incident to rapid composition than the too near approach of a *but* in one of these powers to a *but* in the other. This liability is illustrated in the following extracts.

The Vote, ostensibly directed against Revision, was in reality given in favour of Revision, but not such a curtailed scheme as M. Floquet contemplated. Most of those who voted against him yesterday are ardent advocates of a Revision of the Constitution. But they demand not a partial but a wholesale Revision, and they contend that the existing Chamber is incompetent to undertake the task.—*The Standard*, February 15, 1889.

It is said that English people are manifesting an aversion to sermons; but it may be assumed that the objection to pulpit utterances is not general, but mainly confined to a class.—*The Ecclesiastical Gazette*, July 18, 1889.

It is a perceptible hindrance to the mind of the reader, especially when it occurs in reasoning of a high order, if the symbolic words are employed in varying uses and in near proximity. There is ever a mechanical tendency in the

writer's mind to recur to a word lately used. In regard to the presentive words this danger is well known and commonly guarded against. But in the case of symbolic words there being no loud reverberation the confusion is more subtle and more easily overlooked, and as the train of thought is beforehand in the writer's mind, the disturbance which the little words may occasion to a reader is unperceived by the writer. A remarkable example is afforded by Mozley's *Bampton Lectures*, a book which offers to the enterprizing student a noble arena of intellectual gymnastic, and in which, so far as I have observed (and I am among his diligent readers), the only blemish of form is a rather frequent clash among the Symbolics.

But even without repetition there may be a kind of word-clashing which, if it chiefly offends the mind, yet leaves not the ear wholly undisturbed. Such an effect is apt to result from the contiguity of two verbs which belong to different members in the organism of the sentence; as *achieved served* in the following quotation. The fact seems to be that there is in the verb such an intense vitality as requires a certain free space round about it, and makes it impatient of the near proximity of one of its own species.

But that which Boëthius achieved served, nevertheless, to propagate the tradition of Greek philosophy.—Dr. Hampden, *Bampton Lectures*, ii.

Even the participle of a subordinate clause if it is brought into contact with the finite verb of the sentence, may produce a collision which is injurious to Euphony. Of this we have an example in the following sentence from the pen of a distinguished writer who has made a philosophical study of English style, and whose general success in the practical application is such as to recommend studious attention to the art of writing.

To so present ideas that they may be apprehended with the least possible mental effort, is the desideratum towards which most of the rules above quoted point.—Herbert Spencer, *Essays* (1858), —'The Philosophy of Style.'

If we attend to the instances in which there is a simul-

taneous dissatisfaction of the mind and of the ear, a blending of intellectual confusion with unmelodious rhythm, we shall find that the dangerous proximity of two verbs is one of the most prolific causes of this discomfort. One way in which this cause operates is by producing the ambiguous lodgment of an adverb belonging to one or other of the verbs, making the reader experience a check of doubt as to which of the two verbs is modified by the adverb. Such a check, we will suppose, is momentary, there is no real doubt of the author's meaning when it is examined for an instant;—but the mischief is done, the thread of discourse is broken, the reader's mind has been diverted from the matter to the words and the grammar. In the following quotation 'voluntarily' is in a situation which might well produce this disturbance, nor would the removal of it by itself suffice to establish a melodious rhythm, simply because the two verbs have unadvisedly gravitated to one spot, and the whole clause needs to be recast upon a better plan.

... so bent is Scripture on making us know that our Lord had all that natural fear of death which belongs to man; and that, therefore, when He encountered death for the salvation of the human race, He made all the sacrifice which one who encounters death voluntarily makes.—J. B. Mozley, *Sermons Parochial &c.* xii.

Variety of Sentence.

So far we have been considering Euphony as dependent on conditions in the minuter elements of diction; let us now regard it in a broader aspect, namely, in its dependence upon the constitution of the discourse as a whole. Taking the Paragraph as the basis of observation, we may soon perceive that our sentences must be varied if we wish our discourse to have a pleasing and euphonious sound. This we may partly verify by the condition of German prose. How rarely it attains a euphonious effect must have been noticed by every observer, and I suppose the defect may be attributed largely to the want of choice in the cast of the sentence, which makes it hard to produce a sequence that is euphonious. Let us see how a typical German sentence runs. In order to exhibit it through the medium of English we will take an English sen-

tence and arrange it as if for the tyro to put into German. In the *Atalanta* for December 1889 the following sentence occurs in a little story by W. E. Norris :—'You have a talent for misquotation which would be invaluable to you if you were a statesman out of office, Emily.' In German this would be arranged somewhat in the following manner :—'You have a misquotations-talent, which to you if you an out-of-office-statesman were invaluable be would, Emily.' Whether these rigid and unyielding structures are capable of euphony at all, is more than I undertake to pronounce ;—but certainly the being obliged more or less to use them and the having little if any chance of escape from them, seems to be a condition of things exceedingly unfavourable to the development of euphony in German Prose.

The sweetness of perfect language is a result of a highly organized harmony between a large number of members and functions. What we saw fitting in previous chapters for reasons there developed, appears again fitting likewise here, for the new reason of Euphony which here engages our attention. We saw, for example, that it was good to have variety in the length of the sentences which build up the paragraph. We saw that such variety was pleasing, and that uniformity in sentence-length was wearisome, and that it made any writing unreadable. But now, we may gather up our reasons in the one supreme aim of melodious harmony, and we may say that as uniformity is monotonous, so sentence-variety enlarges the wave of rising and falling sound, which widens and diversifies the exposition of thought, with a mysteriously opening and expansive effect, like the sonorous accompaniment of the ocean, or the hill and dale of a romantic country. The following exemplifies this :—

This is what we call the testimony of a good life ; the effect which a Christian disposition and purpose in life have, as seen by others ; and so serving to accomplish the object of making those others believe in the truth, when they observe the hold which it has upon you. For faith is a sympathetic thing. Faith begets faith ; the faith of one man produces the faith of another man. When others see that you believe, *that* has of itself, by the very laws of our nature, a tendency and the very strongest tendency to

make them think that what you believe is true.—J. B. Mozley, *Parochial Sermons*, viii.

Enough has now been said about Variety, and this is the last time that I shall have to touch on it, and I will now dismiss it with a closing maxim which I borrow from Mr. R. Louis Stevenson:—'the one rule is to be infinitely various.'[1]

We may fitly end this Chapter on Euphony with some glimpses of the state of the arts of Music and Poetry in the previous century. The first part of the eighteenth century was a kind of cataclysmal epoch in all that appertained to the national sense of music. It may be of some ultimate use to bring together in this place some traces of this revolution, although we may not be able fully to ascertain their true order and relation. It is an historical fact, and one that has been a good deal dwelt upon of late, that in medieval times the English had a musical reputation, that England took a leading place among musical nations; and it has been established by ample testimony, foreign as well as domestic, that English song and English harmony were recognized throughout the Middle Ages as a distinct and highly appreciated type of the art. This art had its roots not merely in the culture of a school, but in the popular tastes;—Music was alive among the people.

How are we to account for the change? Some attribute it to the Puritans, but Cromwell was a lover and a patron of music, and it seems that England still continued to be an eminently musical country even after the Restoration. In Mr. Pepys's Diary under the date of July 27, 1663, we meet with the following expressive incident. On a visit to Epsom Wells, at that time a favourite resort of fashion, Mr. Pepys was riding abroad in the morning on the common, when he heard, 'at a distance, under one of the trees, a company got together that sang. I at the distance took them for the Waytes, so I rode up to them, and found them only voices, some citizens met by chance that sung four or five parts excellently. I have not been more pleased with a snapp of musique, considering the circumstances of the time and place,

[1] *The Contemporary Review*, 1885, p. 550.

in all my life.' If these chance-met singers had been of the leisured class, visitors like Pepys himself at Epsom Wells, the instance would not carry the same weight. But the author states that there were 'some citizens met by chance,' which clearly means that they were people of the place, and not visitors. What company of Englishmen 'met by chance' under the trees at Epsom, or anywhere else, on any day of the year 1890 would be able to perform four or five-part songs in excellent tune and time?

If this charming little incident gives us no clue to the causes of our national loss, it at least helps to define its chronology. Various are the solutions which have been offered of the problem, Why, in the course of comparatively few years, music (all but church-music) lost its hold upon the general consciousness of the English nation so completely, that it had to be reintroduced from abroad as a novel and fashionable kind of entertainment. The two epochs, which are the typical dates of this transition, are the premature death in 1695 of Henry Purcell, the last and greatest of our native masters, and the arrival of Handel in this country about 1720. The readiest and most current explanation, that which has been noticed above, the rigidity of the Puritans, is thought to be shaken by such facts as the notorious love of music in representative Puritans like Milton and Cromwell. Sir Arthur Sullivan, in a lecture which he delivered at the Birmingham and Midland Institute in October 1888, seemed to think that the great commercial and political developments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had so absorbed the mind of the nation, that 'we were content to buy our music while we were making steam-engines, railways, cotton-mills, constitutions, anti-Corn Law Leagues, and caucuses.'

Handel's extraordinary success in this country is one of the marvels, or at least one of the most signal curiosities, of musical history. The causes of that success are inseparable from the history of the English language. When Handel came over here he found our literature in command of the tones which are calculated to sway and impress the human mind; he found a nation most open to religious emotions; and he found at the same time in our literature, especially in

Milton and the English Bible, the sublimest themes set forth in a mature diction, sweet and full and melodious, at once delicately impassioned and gravely decorous—and out of these materials, which he might have looked for in vain in the literature of any other country, he composed those divine Recitatives, which they who have heard can never forget. Imbuing himself with the religious aspirations of the English people, and being able to appreciate the grand resources of our sacred literature, Handel, the composer of Italian operas which have perished,

became the mouthpiece of the English nation, the author of sacred epics and sacred dramas which Englishmen have loved from that day to this, and which they have taught the master's own countrymen to know and to love.—*The Times*, October 22, 1888.

Literature and Music have been anciently united in bonds of the closest association. The very word 'Music' in its earlier history embraced them both. Both were cradled in the human Voice. This will be generally admitted. But a question may be raised whether Prose has any right to claim part in this ancestral glory. For although 'Music' did once comprise the whole denotation of Literature, it was at a time when all Literature was under the invocation of the Muses, being in fact what we now call Poetry, or at least being cast in some form of Verse. This is undoubtedly true. But then it must be remembered that the germ of Prose was latent in Verse, and was there maturing for detachment as a new and independent form of Literature. Prose is distinct from Poetry as the offspring is distinct from the Mother. Their nature is one, but their functions apart. Both Poetry and Prose are children of 'Music.' Both retain the virtue of their origin, and share in the family patrimony. By the detachment of Prose, Poetry has gained increased elevation through limitation to her highest and truest province. Poetry has retained, not *all* the Music, but only its mightiest department, the Music of the heart. The mind also has its Music, and that branch has fallen to the lot of Prose. So the music of Prose is that which chimes with Reason, the music of Poetry that which harmonizes with hope and fear, with love and aversion,

with aspiration and awe. Yet Poetry and Prose are not estranged, they are still akin, and neither is quite shut out from the heritage of the other. Poetry abhors unreason, and Prose cherishes right feeling. The estate of Music is still undivided, that is to say, formally undivided; but by a mutual understanding reciprocal rights are more or less respected. There are no lines of demarcation, and tentative encroachments do occur on both sides; but they always terminate amicably, and right themselves by the reciprocity of natural affection.

It has lately been put forward as the opinion of a critic, that the time has now come round when Poetry like Pope's might again have a run of popularity; the interval since the time of satiety and the diversity of the forms which have amused that interval having now (so it is said) done their part and accomplished all that was wanted to restore the national appetite. This is a stimulating idea, and one for which, quite apart from the question of its soundness, we may well be grateful, because it is substantial enough to make a man consider what he has to say to it, whether yea or nay. How many critical opinions meet the eye or the ear, which we never challenge because the interest they awaken in us is too languid to make us care about the point one way or the other! But here is a question with matter in it. Perhaps in the course of time it will be tested by experiment; but meanwhile we venture to answer it *à priori*, and to say, that the forecast is a mistaken one. A successful book might no doubt be written in Pope's couplets, if a writer had something important to say and chose to present it in that vesture. But if ever that were to happen, I surmise that the choice of form would be disadvantageous, and that the author's meaning would have done better conveyed by the vehicle of prose. I think, in short, that never again will any work recommend itself to readers, and give pleasure and wield influence by help of the fact that it is couched in lines after the pattern of Pope's versification. For I think that every theme which is not distinctly poetical can best be treated in prose; and I do not think that any poet will ever find in Pope's couplets the best means of expression for the imaginative and elevated treatment of any theme.

In the eighteenth century there was not indeed, as some have said, an 'utter decay of poetry,' but there was doubtless a something which has suggested this overdrawn verdict;—there was what Mr. W. Minto has not unfitly described as a 'temporary arrest of poetic expansion.' Pope has a smooth melodious rhythm, a clearness of sense and an explicitness of phrase, worthy of the best prose. Pope is correct and regular, especially in his moral and satirical poems. His *Windsor Forest*, *Eloisa*, and *Rape of the Lock* belong to a class apart, and Joseph Warton thought that Pope's reputation in the future would rest on these, reasoning that wit and satire are transitory, while nature and passion are eternal. Warton held that invention and imagination are the chief faculties of a poet, and that the fashion of moralizing in verse had been carried too far. In fact Pope had united to the proper gifts of a poet those prosaic virtues which were the very atmosphere of his literary world. Correctness, distinctness, explicitness, logical order and consecutiveness were ever in his foreground. How different from Shakspeare, whose general effect is thus sketched by Johnson in his Preface.

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with shades and scented with flowers; the composition of Shakspeare is a forest, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the air, interspersed sometimes with weeds and brambles, and sometimes giving shelter to myrtles and roses; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endless diversity.

It was not, as Mr. W. Minto has recently shown,[1] from want of appreciation of what is highest in poetry, but purely from failure of strength to reach the height of their own aspirations, that the eighteenth century laboured under that 'temporary arrest of poetic expansion.' Gray only expressed a feeling that was general among the best minds of his time, when he wrote

But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration given,
That burns in Shakspeare's and in Milton's page,
The pomp and prodigality of heaven.

[1] *Macmillan's Magazine*, September 1888.

The narrow channel of poetry widened into a lake of prose from which it again emerged in broken rills by a new poetic gorge. Prose had largely usurped the place of poetry as the chief exponent of ripened thought, and the new poetry must count among its ancestors not merely Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser &c., but likewise the essayists and novelists of the eighteenth century.

A deep undersong, a certain sphered harmony of language, is the natural product and token of the wholeness and perfection of the instrument. The growth that has reached maturity declares itself by singing. Even Carlyle, usually so unmusical, when transported by some generous emotion he forgets his antics and his quiddities, and glows with that full and fervent heat which fuses the whole of nature into one, even *he* grows—I was going to say tuneful, but no, not tuneful, something deeper, wider, more undefined—melodious, harmonious, mystic-musical. Thus:

The National Assembly, in one of its stormiest moods, is debating a Law against Emigration; Mirabeau declaring aloud, 'I swear beforehand that I will not obey it.' Mirabeau is often at the Tribune this day, with endless impediments from without; with the old unabated energy from within. What can murmurs and clamours, from Left or from Right, do to this man; like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved? With clear thought; with strong bass voice, though at first low, uncertain, he claims audience, sways the storm of men: anon the sound of him waxes, softens; he rises into far-sounding melody of strength, triumphant, which subdues all hearts; his rude seamed face, desolate, fire-scathed, becomes fire-lit, and radiates: once again men feel, in these beggarly ages, what is the potency and omnipotency of man's word on the souls of men. 'I will triumph or be torn into fragments,' he was heard once to say. 'Silence,' he cries now, in strong word of command, in imperial consciousness of strength, 'Silence the thirty voices, *Silence aux trente voix!*'—and Robespierre and the Thirty Voices die into mutterings; and the Law is once more as Mirabeau would have it. —*French Revolution*, II. iii. 5.

CHAPTER IX

STYLE

Account of the term. Style is not the same thing as Dexterity. It differs from Performance—Gustave Flaubert. Relation of Style to Diction—A rich Style. Carlyle: testimony of Mr. Froude as to his Style; contrasted with Cardinal Newman by Principal Shairp. Style analogous to Wit or Beauty. Buffon's famous dictum. J. R. Green on Addison's style. Style analogous to physiognomy. Style, to be worthy of the name, must be your own—must be unaffected: Dr. Arnold—must not be imitative—Croft and Johnson: Tillotson and Dryden. 'Style' or 'Styles'?—The corporate Style of the newspaper—The 'specific style' of Mr. Herbert Spencer. Whether Style has any connection with Morality. The importance of Style illustrated by the examples of Polybius, Bishop Butler, and Frances Burney (Madame D'Arblay). Analogy of Style with Music.

Le style est l'homme même.—Buffon, *Discours de Réception à l'Académie*, 1753.

Das schöne Wort Buffon's 'der Stil ist der Mensch selber!' ist auf Niemand anwendbarer als auf Lessing. Seine Schreibart ist ganz wie sein Character, wahr, fest, schmucklos, schön und imponirend durch die inwohnende Stärke.—*Heine.*

The term *Style*, which we have adopted from the French, was derived from the Latin word *stylus* (more correctly *stilus*), the common name of the Roman pen. This instrument was a sort of pencil with metal point; and it was used for writing upon tablets of wax. The upper end of the *stilus* was partly flattened, partly convex; to serve as a tool for erasure, which was effected by the process of resmoothing the wax. The precept in Horace (*Sat.* I. x. 72) *sæpe stilum vertas*—often turn your stile, enjoined a habit of careful revision.

Already in Cicero's time the mechanical implement of writing had given its name to the fashion and quality of written composition. Cicero speaks of *stilus optimus et præstantissimus*, the best and most excellent style; and again, *orationes pæne Attico stilo scriptæ*, orations written in almost Attic style.

In our own early times, this Latin word was used for written composition generally, without regard to quality, and without exclusive application to Latin. In a Land Charter bearing date A. D. 903, the granting portion, which is in Latin, refers to the descriptive portion, which is in the vernacular, by the name of 'stylus Anglicus,' i.e. English diction. But in the prevalent usage of the word, it stood for 'Latin,' or for literary and elevated composition in whatever language. At this stage it was equivalent to 'Literary Diction,' as opposed to ordinary or popular speech. The further ascent of the term, to denote a sort of moral physiognomy in written discourse, is a high and interesting refinement of modern times.

At the same time that Style implies all that is behind us in the present treatise, judgment in choice of expression, a sufficient knowledge of usage, and that literary skill which comes by practice, it is still something above and beyond all these:—it is distinct from diction, from literary skill, and from dexterity in performance.

Dexterity in writing has been described by Mr. R. L. Stevenson in such a manner as to afford simultaneously precept and example. He says:—

> The true business of the literary artist is to plait or weave his meaning, involving it around itself; so that each sentence, by successive phrases, shall first come into a kind of knot, and then, after a moment of suspended meaning, solve and clear itself. In every properly constructed sentence there should be observed this knot or hitch; so that (howevery delicately) we are led to foresee, to expect, and then to welcome, the successive phrases. The pleasure may be heightened by an element of surprise, as, very grossly, in the common figure of the antithesis, or, with greater subtlety, where antithesis is first suggested and then deftly evaded. Each phrase, besides, is to be comely in itself; and between the implication and the evolution of the sentence there should be a satisfying equipoise of sound; for nothing more often disappoints the ear than a sentence solemnly and sonorously prepared, and hastily and weakly finished. Nor should the balance be too striking and exact, for the one rule is to be infinitely various; to interest, to disappoint, to surprise, and yet still to gratify; to be ever changing, as it were, the stitch, and yet still to give the effect of an ingenious neatness.
>
> The conjuror juggles with two oranges, and our pleasure in

beholding him springs from this, that neither is for an instant overlooked or sacrificed. So with the writer. His pattern, which is to please the supersensual ear, is yet addressed, throughout and first of all, to the demands of logic. Whatever be the obscurities, whatever the intricacies of the argument, the neatness of the fabric must not suffer, or the artist has been proved unequal to his design. And, on the other hand, no form of words must be selected, no knot must be tied among the phrases, unless knot and word be precisely what is wanted to forward and illuminate the argument; for to fail in this is to swindle in the game.—*Contemporary Review*, vol. xlvii. (1885), p. 551.

Surely it would be almost impossible to put the idea of dexterity more dexterously. All this is of great value as exercise, as part of the discipline through which the writer has to pass. Only let him not suppose that in the study and practice of dexterity he is engaged upon his main business. By no means. If indeed the writer's aim is to be sensational, and if this is to be the limit of his aim, then there appears to be no reason why he should not rest satisfied with dexterity. But if he has, or if he hopes that at some future day he may have, something serious and important to communicate, if he feels the want of an expanding faculty of language to keep pace with the growth of his thought, then he will not be likely to find satisfaction in dexterity.

The idea of performance is apt to degenerate into laboured descriptions like the following, which is taken from a sensational novel:

The silver rays touched with seeming tenderness the dark hair rolled high upon the little head, and fell across the white neck, half concealed by a fleecy drapery gathered together carelessly, and held by one slender hand in a long loose glove; they struck cool and sharp on the sweeping lines of the dress, accentuating each fold of the silken texture, and threw into bold relief the soft pallor of the delicately rounded face, lingering longest where the dark brows made a mystery of the eyes, and kissing the curved lips that now were set and defiant; illuminating and defining each gracious curve and outline of the graceful form, with the same ethereal brilliancy that transformed the trickling fountain into an elixir of life and awakened the leaf-god Narcissus into perennial youthfulness.

The artifices of composition belong rather to Diction than

to Style. It is desirable to observe the distinction between these two because of their immediate contiguity, and the liability to confusion which is the natural result. For while this term has gradually risen to an abstract elevation of its own, it has left behind it a surviving trail of earlier and more elementary usage. The attainment of a higher has not involved the extinction of the lower grades of its signification. Accordingly we often see the term Style used in a manner that is hardly distinguishable from Diction, as in Mr. Pater's recent essay on 'Style' in his volume entitled *Appreciations*. And I will not undertake in the present chapter to keep myself clear from such a usage; the effort to do so would be too embarrasing; for the higher sense is as yet but imperfectly detached from the lower. All I will undertake is to keep the higher sense more or less in view.

Mr. Pater quotes without author's name the following description of the literary travail and birth-pangs of Gustave Flaubert, by (as he says) 'a sympathetic commentator.'

> Possessed by an absolute belief that there exists but one way of expressing one thing, one word to call it by, one adjective to qualify, one verb to animate it, he gave himself to superhuman labour for the discovery, in every phrase, of that word, that verb, that epithet. In this way, he believed in some mysterious harmony of expression, and when a true word seemed to him to lack euphony still went on seeking another, with invincible patience, certain that he had not yet got hold of the *unique* word. . . . A thousand preoccupations would beset him at the same moment, always with this desperate certitude fixed in his spirit: Among all the expressions in the world, all forms and turns of expression, there is but *one*—one form, one mode—to express what I want to say.

Upon this comment Mr. Pater proceeds to superadd his own approving comment: 'The one word for the one thing, the one thought, amid the multitude of words, terms, that might just do: the problem of style was there!' I am afraid that I must take Mr. Pater on the whole to endorse with his approbation this painful method of pursuing literary art, although he admits lower down that this anxiety of Flaubert's in 'seeking the phrase' was 'aggravated certainly by a morbid physical condition.'

This whole discussion opens to our view an important distinction between the English and French prose. The French literary genius seems apt (at least in these later days) to go with such eager quest after the fitness of word and phrase as to merge Style in Diction. If it is the fitness of the word to the thing signified that constitutes the felicity of Diction, it is the faithfulness of the whole face of the discourse as a reflex of the author's mind that constitutes the genuine physiognomy of Style.

In this higher sense, then, Style may be said to begin where Diction ends. The choice of fit words and the skilful arrangement of them with suitable gradations and variations in a well-cast sentence is the first elementary preparation for what is called Style. The term cannot be applied in its full significance to anything short of a Paragraph. Style does not, strictly speaking, reside in the words or in the phrases, or even in the sentence, but in that sequence of sentences which constitute Discourse, and of which the smallest adequate sample is a Paragraph. This when happily conceived attains to a veritable melody of linked movements which, being felt to correspond to the true order of thought, results in a harmony, capable in its happiest moments of kindling great pleasure in the reader, and something approaching to a thrill of joy in the producer.

A rich style (such a style as Dr. Arnold thought he could not write) comes not from mighty words or gorgeous imagery, but from a stored wealth of association. And herein lies the great advantage of familiarity with the best authors, including the poets and sacred writ. An excess of imagery is luxurious and tedious; but richness goes easily with a light and rapid touch. Observe in the ensuing quotation the telling force of 'bettered'—springing from Shakspearian association.

> But Baur is far from marking the lowest point of negative criticism. He found disciples who bettered his instruction, until it became as hard for a young Professor, anxious to gain a reputation for ingenuity, to make a new assault on a New Testament book, as it is now for an Alpine Club man to find in Switzerland a virgin peak to climb.—G. Salmon, *Intr. N. T.* p. 451.

I have sometimes used Carlyle's diction as a storehouse of deterrent examples, but it does not follow that I condemn his style. Far from it. I esteem it as a genuine product, I value it as a new and effective literary form, a form which for the picturesque has never been equalled or even approached. But it is not a style to adopt as a model. Carlyle himself did not begin with it when first he came before the public as an author. In his *Schiller* he wrote regulation English, Johnsonian English; and he conformed to the rules of symmetrical composition. And this explains why I find Carlyle so convenient as a mine of warning examples, because he himself indicates by his earlier works what is the pattern he would set before beginners; and also because it is more comfortable both for me and for my readers to get our deterrent examples (since we must have them) from something that is good in itself and pleasant to handle.

Carlyle's style, which has often been severely criticized, and called Carlylese by way of stigma, is really a product of high art, and I do not think that those who have compared him as a literary innovator with Dante, are chargeable with any excessive or unreasonable panegyric. Many explanations have been offered to account for his style; perhaps the most popular of these is the idea that he got it from reading German. How such a notion came up it is hard to say, because except for his occasional use of German words, and a fondness for strange unwieldy compounds—whose merit lies in their very unwieldiness, because they compel attention by making the reader stare—there is nothing German about it. This notion may possibly have sprung from the jumble of two synchronous novelties, the novelty of Carlyle's diction and the then novelty of German literature in England. Two things, both novel at the same time, may have been confusedly huddled together in many minds that knew but superficially of either; like Tenterden steeple and the Goodwin Sands.

On this subject Mr. Froude writes thus :—

This style, which has been such a stone of stumbling, originated, he has often said to myself, in the old farm-house at Annandale. The humour of it came from his mother. The form was his father's

common mode of speech, and had been adopted by himself for its brevity and emphasis.

As to the imputation that his style was imitative of the German, and particularly of the style of Jean Paul Richter, Froude says: 'No criticism could be worse founded.' On this point Carlyle himself said:

As to my poor style, Edward Irving and his admiration of the old Puritans and Elizabethans—whom at heart I never could entirely adore, though trying hard—his and everybody's doctrine on that head played a much more important part than Jean Paul upon it. And the most important by far was that of nature, you would perhaps say, if you had ever heard my Father speak, or my Mother and her inward melodies of heart and voice.

Mr. Froude, a sincere admirer of Carlyle, pronounced this judgment upon his style:

The style which troubled others, and troubled himself when he thought about it, was perhaps the best possible to convey thoughts which were often like the spurting of volcanic fire; but it was inharmonious, rough-hewn, and savage.—(*Carlyle's Life in London*, i. 91).

And again:

Carlyle 'created' nothing, but with a real subject before him he was the greatest of historical painters . . . with a few sharp lines, he could describe face, figure, character, action, with a complete insight never rivalled, except by Tacitus, and with a certain sympathy, a perennial flashing of humour, of which Tacitus has none. He produces a gallery of human portraits, each so distinctly drawn, that whenever studied it can never be forgotten.

In the following interesting passage we see the contrast between the style of J. H. (Cardinal) Newman, and that of Carlyle, as it struck the observation of his countryman Principal Shairp.

It was in his *Parochial Sermons*, beyond all his other works, that he spoke out the truths which were within him—spoke them with all the fervour of a prophet and the severe beauty of a poet. Modern English literature has nowhere any language to compare with the style of these Sermons, so simple and transparent, yet so subtle withal; so strong yet so tender; the grasp of a strong man's hand,

combined with the trembling tenderness of a woman's heart, expressing in a few monosyllables truths which would have cost other men a page of philosophic verbiage, laying the most gentle yet penetrating finger on the very core of things, reading to men their own most secret thoughts better than they knew them themselves.

Carlyle's style is like the full untutored swing of the giant's arm; Cardinal Newman's is the assured self-possession, the quiet gracefulness, of the finished athlete. The one, when he means to be effective, seizes the most vehement feelings and the strongest words within his reach, and hurls them impetuously at the object. The other, with disciplined moderation, and delicate self-restraint, shrinks instinctively from overstatement, but penetrates more directly to the core by words of sober truth and 'vivid exactness.'

One often hears a lament that the mellow cadence and perfect rhythm of the Collects and the Liturgy are a lost art—a grace that is gone from the English language. It is not so. There are hundreds of passages in Cardinal Newman's writings, which, for graceful rhythm and perfect melody, may be placed side by side with the most soothing harmonies of the Prayer Book.—John Campbell Shairp, *Aspects of Poetry*, pp. 443, 444.

Style is an indefinable thing. We can say how the term rose, and we can say where and under what conditions the thing itself rises, but we cannot formulate a Definition for it. It is in like case with Wit or Beauty or Character, all of which are well known and easily recognized, but they cannot be defined. And for a very simple and obvious reason. All Definition is made out of comparisons between things like in their general kind, but unlike in their particular kind. So that for a thing to be definable, it must belong to a more general kind. Things that belong to no general kind, but stand by themselves, we call unique; and of things unique there is no definition.

That this is the case with Wit is an old observation. On this subject there is a felicitious (though elaborate) passage in the writings of Dr. Isaac Barrow, in which that comprehensive observer, not attempting to define what Wit is, has contented himself with an enumeration of some of the forms under which 'it lieth,' the things about which 'it playeth, and the variety of conditions in which 'it riseth.'

Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale;

sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound; sometimes is is wrapped in a dress of humorous expression; sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude; sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense; sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture, passeth for it; sometimes an affected simplicity; sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being; sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange; sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose. Often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable and inexplicable; being answerable to the numberless rovings of fancy and windings of language.

The saying of Buffon that the Style is the man himself, has been so universally accepted and applauded, that we may reasonably apprehend it has a deep and a comprehensive meaning, or it could hardly have met with such unanimous and permanent approbation. If an attempt were made to develop the thought which is couched in it, it would certainly prove very prolific. One practical maxim there is which seems to grow out of it like a corollary; that if a writer wishes to form a style, an individual style that can be called his own, he must make it a rule to express himself habitually in his own diction, and not write, as too many do, in shreds of reminiscence, and patches of allusion.

I do not know of any writer who has touched the subject of Addison's style more happily than J. R. Green in his Introduction to *Essays of Joseph Addison* (Golden Treasury Series). After explaining how it is that his lessons of morality and conduct are now common-place, that they have in fact become so as a result of the very success which attended his efforts, Mr. Green proceeds:—

When these then have been deducted, when we cease to study Addison as a statesman, or a critic, or a theologian, or a moralist, what of him remains? Well, I think we may fairly answer, all that

is individually and distinctively Addison. There remains his light and playful fancy. There remains his incomparable humour. There remains, pervading all, his large and generous humanity. I know no writer whose moral temper so perfectly reflects itself in his work. His style, with its free unaffected movement, its clear distinctness, its graceful transitions, its delicate harmonies, its appropriateness of tone; the temperance and moderation of his treatment, the effortless self-mastery, the sense of quiet power, the absence of exaggeration, or extravagance, the perfect keeping with which he deals with his subject; or again, the exquisite reserve, the subtle tenderness, the geniality, the pathos of his humour—what are these but the literary reflexion of Addison himself, of that temper so pure and lofty yet so sympathetic, so strong yet so loveable? In the midst of that explosion of individuality, of individual energy and force, which marked the eighteenth century, Addison stands out individual, full of force, but of a force harmonious, self-controlled, instinct with the sense of measure, of good taste, good humour, culture, urbanity.

In a million faces, no two are quite alike. There may be many cases of resemblance, but never one so complete as to obliterate the individual character of each. Of the same nature is Style, where it is a true Style, that is to say, where it is naturally and fully developed. Among Styles that are genuine there is no sameness; every Style has its own individuality, and therefore it has in itself a fund of novelty.

We may learn to know Styles as we learn to know faces, and if we think the matter worth the trouble of a little attention, we may advance so far in it that there is hardly any limit to possible progress. With a very moderate amount of study we may recognise the prose of such characteristic writers as Hooker, Clarendon, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Defoe, Bunyan, L'Estrange, Dryden, Johnson, Gibbon, De Quincey, Carlyle, Macaulay, Ruskin, Thirlwall, Grote, Mozley, Liddon, J. R. Green, Maine, Freeman.

The following extract is from an anonymous writing, and I have nothing but internal evidence of the authorship, yet I have no fear of making a mistake. True, the internal evidence is not limited to Style; there is a topic introduced, which suggests the personality of the author. As this fact might be supposed to be my clue, I will only say that I

had assigned the article to its author long before I arrived at the 'Harrietfrage.'

We may remark that, while Mr. Bryce, in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, fully accepts the genuineness of the 'Anecdota,' Mr. Bury follows Ranke in one of those ingenious and hairsplitting theories in which German scholarship is so fruitful. The book was either written by Procopius or by some one who pretended to be Procopius, and an impudent forger he was if he was not Procopius. There is certainly nothing in all history more staggering than these same 'Anecdota.' Can we believe that the grave author of the Wars stooped to write this collection of strange, some surely incredible, scandals? If Justinian did walk about without his head, there was at least no moral turpitude in the act. But Theodora—that she was not always perfectly virtuous it is easy to believe; but there are bounds in all things. Still it is to be noted that nobody charges anything against her in that way after she became Empress. Anyhow she was not as Messallina or Faustina. But does this make the earlier stories more or less credible? One almost needs the experience of a father confessor to say. Mr. Bury has something to say on the matter: but we are not sure that we feel any the more certified one way or the other after anything that anybody has to say. One thing is clear, that Theodora was a woman of great intellect and energy. Her possession of all practical gifts is certainly much clearer than her husband's. But the whole story is a puzzle. One sometimes wonders how the literary mind can find time to amuse itself with a *Harrietfrage* while there is a *Theodorafrage* to grapple with.

Heraclius, at whose history Mr. Bury has worked with a good heart, is another puzzle. The seeming lack of energy which he shows in the earlier part of his reign was only seeming; but that the conqueror of Persia, the warrior who outdid Trajan and rivalled Alexander, sat still and saw the Saracen tear away Syria and Egypt without striking a blow in person has ever been a mystery. Mr. Bury takes the same general view as Finlay. The health of Heraclius was failing, his mind was sinking; Martina was spinning webs about him. All this is likely enough; still the thing is strange. Many men, many princes, would have thought it better to die in such a cause, if they could do nothing by living.—*The Guardian*, January 1, 1890.

Perhaps the greatest hindrance to the formation of a just Style is the general proclivity to imitation. This assumes

many forms, but the most prevalent is that which embodies patches of phraseology from famous authors, stringing them together with a feeble thread of discourse spun out for a context. This, if indulged freely, produces a result that may be conveniently described as Piebald.

There is, of course, a legitimate use of borrowed phrases, which, when rightly applied, will often lend a fine illustration, because they bring with them, not merely the natural force of the words, but also in addition thereto the rich associations which cling to the phrase in virtue of its original connection. The appropriation of celebrated phrases can only be justified by its manifest felicity, to which another condition must be added, namely, its rarity. It must not be done so often as to produce the effect of a bunch of cut flowers, or a patch-work; your context must not be Piebald; it must, after all, on the whole, be your own. Indeed, the very appropriation itself, if really happy, would be something of your own.

When De Quincey, in his description of running away from school in the silence of the early summer morning, brings in a few words from the close of the *Paradise Lost*, every reader feels that he has, by force of appropriateness, made it his own.

> I waited until I saw the trunk placed on a wheel-barrow, and on its way to the carrier's; then 'with Providence my guide,' I set off on foot,—carrying a small parcel, with some articles of dress, under my arm.

The same allowance or rather admiration is due to the following appropriation by the same author from the same context:

> Except the Blue-beard room, which the poor child believed to be haunted, all others, from the attics to the cellars, were at our service; 'the world was all before us'; and we pitched our tent for the night in any spot we chose.

Indeed, the felicity with which he brings in phrases of *Paradise Lost*, is almost a feature of De Quincey's composition. Here is another instance from the Eighth Book:—

> Even with my limited opportunities for observing what went on, I saw many scenes of London intrigues, and complex chicanery,

'cycle and epicycle, orb in orb,' at which I sometimes smile to this day—and at which I smiled then, in spite of my misery.

In a word, Style (to be worth the name) must not rest upon imitation. It must be truly original, though all the elements of it are derived. Everything that is best, or best suited to the genius of the student, must be contemplated and appropriated, but by the organic way of digestion and assimilation, not by the crude way of mechanic imitation. There is nothing to be wondered at when a great master of style makes acknowledgments to models which to our eye have left no trace on his work. If there is any likeness between Carlyle and Hudibras, it is very slight and superficial; and we should never have known that Mr. John Bright was dependent upon Milton if we had not been told so. Dryden formed his style upon Tillotson's, and yet what can be more unlike? The one, formal, measured, regular, logical, equable and balanced—the other, free as air and unconstrained, and (according to Johnson's happy phrase) as if every word had fallen into its place by chance.

None of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other. The clauses are never balanced, nor the periods modelled; every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous; what is little is gay; what is great is splendid.—*Life of Dryden.*

If a comparison between these two authors results in a sense of contrast rather than of similarity, that is no reason for doubting the trustworthiness of Dryden's testimony that he formed his style upon Tillotson's. No doubt he admired in Tillotson's style that which he himself lacked, and he disciplined himself thereby, with the effect, not of obscuring his natural bent and genius, but rather of exhibiting it to better advantage and even with a greater force of originality. Of Tillotson Macaulay says:

His style is not brilliant; but it is pure, transparently clear, and equally free from the levity and from the stiffness which disfigured the sermons of some eminent divines of the seventeenth

century. He is always serious: yet there is about his manner a certain graceful ease, &c.—*History*, c. xiv.

This description would not fit Dryden at all:—to begin with, Dryden is emphatically brilliant, and perhaps not always serious.

The essence of style is individuality. As no two faces in a million are really alike, but each has its own character, so, and with at least equal force of variety, does mind differ from mind. The difference is constant, so as to prevent monotony and stagnation; the difference is so limited within a prescribed range, as to produce not repugnance but attraction. Every man who will be true to his own nature and his own gifts, who will deliver with honesty and simplicity that which he has to say, may by patient study and discipline either add to the material of human knowledge or else adorn and improve the possession of it. The bane of style is vanity and impatience and affectation. A vain and hasty mind is like a raw young gardener who thinks to make a pretty garden by the ready method of transferring a selection of plants in flower to his own particular plot of earth. This method never answers. He who would write with anything worthy to be called style must first grow thoughts which are worth communicating, and then he must deliver them in his own natural language. Else, he will fall into the snare of fine writing, as in the subjoined specimen. It is from an author whose thoughts are sane and sound, and who, if he would have written simply and unaffectedly, just for instance as he would have told it to his mother or sister, might have produced graceful and useful work. But here is what he has produced. He is speaking of the uses and dangers of creeds and formularies:

Faith uses the means and instruments of knowledge and of growth in godliness, but is ever struggling against resting in them, is ever striving to rise above them. Conscious of the strange human liability to mistake the lantern for the light, the telescope for the natural sight of the eye, the image in the mirror for the thing reflected, to have a sentimental fondness for moonlight above the light of day, or at least the disposition to be satisfied with the lower instead of striving to reach the higher of the two, faith refuses

neither to use lamps, nor telescopes, nor mirrors, nor to walk by moonlight till the sun rises, but only insists on keeping steadily in view the standard and idea of light and sight and knowledge to which these instruments minister and tend, and on using these lesser lights, only as shining more and more unto the perfect day.

On the importance of being natural and simple, and on the difference between an ornate and a rich style, there is a letter by Dr. Arnold in answer to a friend's animadversions on a review he had written about a critical work by Poppo. It contains useful reflections for any who are prone to fine writing.

Now for your remarks on my Poppo. All clumsiness in the sentences, and want of connexion between the parts, I will do my best to amend; and the censure on verbal criticism I will either soften, or scratch out entirely; for J. Keble objected to the same part. The translations also I will try to improve, and indeed I am aware of their baldness. The additions which you propose I can make readily: but as to the general plainness of the style, I do not think I clearly see the fault which you allude to, and to say the truth, the plainness, i.e. the absence of ornament and long words, is the result of deliberate intention. At any rate, in my own case, I am sure an attempt at ornament would make my style so absurd that you yourself would laugh at it. I could not do it naturally, for I have now so habituated myself to that unambitious and plain way of writing, and absence of Latin words as much as possible, that I could not write otherwise without manifest affectation. Of course I do not mean to justify awkwardness and clumsy sentences, of which I am afraid my writings are too full, and all of which I will do my best to alter wherever you have marked them; but anything like puff, or verbal ornament, I cannot bring myself to. Richness of style I admire heartily, but this I cannot attain to for lack of power. All I could do would be to produce a bad imitation of it, which seems to me very ridiculous. For the same reason I know not how to make the review more striking; I cannot make it so by its own real weight and eloquence, and therefore I think I should only make it offensive by trying to make it fine.—Stanley's *Life of Dr. Arnold*, under the year 1821.

The young writer should attend to his diction very carefully, but leave his Style to take care of itself. The English language offering the greatest facility for choice and variation,

it is for the aspiring author to discover the composition or diction which is most adaptable to his matter and most kindred to his own genius. It is not wise to select a style for imitation on the ground of admiration for a favourite author, and still less on the ground of that author's reputation and success. It is only too easy for an imitator to conjure up a disadvantageous contrast between himself and some celebrated pen. Burke would not for a moment listen to Boswell when he praised Croft's imitation of Dr. Johnson's style; but firing up he exclaimed with vehemence :—'No, no, it is *not* a good imitation of Johnson; it has all his pomp without his force; it has all the nodosities of the oak without its strength; it has all the contortions of the sibyl without the inspiration.'

The question has been raised whether 'Style' is some one abstract perfection, which should be spoken of in the singular number, or whether there should and ought to be as many 'Styles' as there are writers. In trying to answer this question I would premise that it is a question which is mixed up with the difference between Diction and Style, and I think that those who maintain the abstract perfection of Style like a Platonic ἰδέα, are for the most part thinking of what we have in this treatise elected to call Diction.

It is not easy to separate Style from Diction. Perhaps we may say that the two things cannot be separated at all, except in the region of the abstract intelligence. Style seems to adhere to Diction as grace to movement, as pleasure to action, as happiness to duty. Still, it is worth the effort to think of it apart, because it tends to encourage the highest discipline of literary endeavour. And in this connection it may be asked whether it would not be worth while to adjust our phraseology so that there might be no uncertainty whether we were speaking of Style or of Diction. Many current adjectival qualifications of Style are such as to apply rather to Diction. Thus we hear of a rich style, a close style, a terse style, a copious style, and besides these epithets Mr. Pater supplies several more, as reserved, opulent, abundant, musical, stimulant, academic. Now it seems to me that these epithets might be with advantage reserved and appropriated to Dic-

tion. But among adjectives which he has applied to Style there are some which I should not desire to remove. Such are 'characteristic' and 'expressive.' If we accept the dictum 'The style is the man' it seems to me that we must regard Style as subjective and not objective, as a personal and not an impersonal phenomenon.

And if this principle is sound there should be as many Styles as writers. Mr. Pater quotes his French guide (so he calls him) saying: '"Styles," says Flaubert's commentator, "Styles, as so many peculiar moulds, each of which bears the mark of a particular writer, who is to pour into it the whole content of his ideas, were no part of his theory. What he believed in was *Style*: that is to say, a certain absolute and unique manner of expressing a thing, in all its intensity and colour."'

Now if Style be the very man himself, if it be analogous to physiognomy, if it must be each writer's own without imitation or affectation, I do not see how it is possible to admit that the thing to be aimed at is some one absolute and unique thing called Style, for Style must be as diverse as character, and therefore I feel myself bound to register my suffrage against the doctrine of Flaubert in favour of the plural formula of 'Styles.'

I would make one exception, an exception however more apparent than real, to the above contention. It may almost be counted among those exceptions that prove the rule. I mean that remarkable phenomenon of a corporate Style, which a united body of writers that has been long established and firmly organized exhibits to an admiring world. The Style of *The Times* is a thing perfectly well known to every 'constant reader.' Hardly less distinct is the Style of each of the high-class journals; of the *Standard*, the *Guardian*, the *Daily News*, and the *Daily Telegraph*. The *Spectator* could hardly be more homogeneous than it is in tone, if week by week it flowed from the pen of one man from the first word to the last. A paper, which has commanded a vast amount of able writing, and yet has never presented any appearance of unity of Style, is the *Saturday Review*.[1] Now it is interesting to

[1] This has been objected to by a friend who is in a better position to judge

observe that this family Style which a great newspaper gets has something about it which differs from the Style of an author. The fact seems to be that it is a corporate and not a personal style. To those, then, who urge that Style should be impersonal, I assent so far as the corporate Style is concerned, and no further. This is the general case of the best newspaper Styles; unless we make an exception in favour of the *Spectator*, which most nearly approaches to the possession of a personal Style.

Here will be the most convenient place to notice an apophthegm of Mr. Herbert Spencer's, which seems to oppose our present contention, and may cause confusion if it is wrongly understood. 'To have a specific style is to be poor in speech.' It might appear on a superficial view as if this conflicted with the demand we have made for an individual style, a style as recognizable and personal as the human countenance. And this impression might be confirmed by such a sentence as this in the sequel—'a perfectly endowed man must unconsciously write in all styles.' But it must be remembered that the remarkable Essay from which this is taken was written nearly forty years ago, and that both in its title 'The Philosophy of Style' and in the whole of its argument from first to last the term 'Style' represents that which in the present treatise is called 'Diction.' If we take into view the whole passage we shall see that it is so.

One in whom the powers of expression fully responded to the state of feeling, would unconsciously use that variety in the mode of presenting his thoughts, which Art demands. This constant employment of one species of phraseology, which all have now to strive against, implies an undeveloped faculty of language. To have a specific style is to be poor in speech. If we remember that in the far past, men had only nouns and verbs to convey their ideas with, and that from then to now the growth has been towards a greater number of implements of thought, and consequently towards a greater complexity and variety in their combinations; we may infer that we are now, in our use of sentences, much what the primitive

than I am myself. Perhaps I am too much under the influence of memory of the *Saturday Review*'s early days, when I knew several of the writers and recognized their styles.

man was in his use of words: and that a continuance of the process that has hitherto gone on, must produce increasing heterogeneity in our modes of expression. As now, in a fine nature, the play of the features, the tones of the voice and its cadences, vary in harmony with every thought uttered; so, in one possessed of a fully-developed power of speech, the mould in which each combination of words is cast will similarly vary with, and be appropriate to, the sentiment. That a perfectly-endowed man must unconsciously write in all styles, we may infer from considering how styles originate. Why is Johnson pompous, Goldsmith simple? Why is one author abrupt, another rhythmical, another concise? Evidently in each case the habitual mode of utterance must depend upon the habitual balance of the nature. The predominant feelings have by use trained the intellect to represent them. But while long, though unconscious, discipline has made it do this efficiently, it remains, from lack of practice, incapable of doing the same for the less active feelings; and when these are excited, the usual verbal forms undergo but slight modifications. Let the powers of speech be fully developed, however—let the ability of the intellect to utter the emotions be complete; and this fixity of style will disappear. The perfect writer will express himself as Junius, when in the Junius frame of mind; when he feels as Lamb felt, will use a like familiar speech; and will fall into the ruggedness of Carlyle when in a Carlylean mood. Now he will be rhythmical and now irregular; here his language will be plain and there ornate; sometimes his sentences will be balanced and at other times unsymmetrical; for a while there will be considerable sameness, and then again great variety. His mode of expression naturally responding to his state of feeling, there will flow from his pen a composition changing to the same degree that the aspects of his subject change.

There is in this vigorous passage such a stretch of the imagination, the pictured range and performance of the 'perfectly-endowed man' is so very far in advance of all experience, that anything like criticism or formal discussion is precluded. But it is important to observe that 'Style' here means Diction, and that consequently there is no conflict with the famous saying of Buffon, nothing that runs counter to the general sense which has stamped that saying with approbation. What is here discredited is that assumption of fixity in an author's diction upon which has been founded the claim of some learned Germans, especially those of the Tübingen school, to

be able by analysis of an ancient book to determine whether some other writing could or could not have proceeded from the same author.

It has been sometimes questioned whether there is a connection between Art and Morality, or whether they are mutually independent of each other. There are mechanic arts, in which it may be difficult to trace the connection. I lately stood watching a man who was making 'spiks' (pronounced *speeks*; a fine instance of the conservation of the true and original sound of the native English *i*) for the thatcher; and when I reflect in memory upon the method of his art, I am bound to admit that the connection of morality therewith was perhaps somewhat remote, as it certainly was to my apprehension obscure; but nevertheless the effect of my observation, as a whole, was not to satisfy me that such a connection had really no existence. But when we come to the Art of writing, a high ingenious Art, I imagine few would deny that it must make some considerable difference to the quality of a writer's style, whether he can or cannot honestly appropriate the words which Thomas Love Peacock has put into the mouth of his curtal friar.

> To live in seeming fellowship and secret rivalry; to have a hand for all and a heart for none; to be everybody's acquaintance and nobody's friend; to meditate the ruin of all on whom we smile; and to dread the secret stratagems of all who smile on us; to pilfer honours and despoil fortunes, not by fighting in daylight but by sapping in darkness: these are arts which *we*, by'r Lady, have not learned.—*Robin Hood.*

The expression of Style is so various and differs by traits so delicate, that it naturally suggests a comparison with human sensibility, and the expression of emotion by the human face. By threads like these the mind is drawn to associate Style with moral character, and it is interesting to observe how frequently this idea has suggested itself, and to what a variety of authors.

He who writes much cannot well remain in ignorance of the subtle and insidious temptations that beset his path, offering him dainty opportunities for the gratification of

feelings and motives which he could not avow, tempting him to violate his convictions, mar his candour, and ruin the integrity of his mind. If he thinks that style is a matter quite detached from moral character, he has one motive the less to strengthen him in the effort to walk uprightly on slippery ground. I will not attempt to describe or to catalogue them; the snares of which I speak are too delicate, too personal, to invite delineation. I will only quote a passage, which while it adds one to the samples of writing distributed over this treatise, will at the same time serve to intimate the kind of things which make the writer's work an arena for moral probation.

And further still, it must be observed, that the Art of composing, which is a chief accomplishment, has in itself a tendency to make us artificial and insincere. For to be ever attending to the fitness and propriety of our words, is (or at least there is a risk of its being) a kind of acting; and knowing what can be said on both sides of a subject is a main step towards thinking the one side as good as the other. Hence men in ancient times, who cultivated polite literature, went by the name of 'Sophists'; that is, men who wrote elegantly, and talked eloquently, on any subject whatever, right or wrong. St. Luke perchance might have been such a Sophist, had he not been a Christian.—J. H. Newman, *Parochial Sermons*, ii. 374 (St. Luke).

I will end this by quoting a paragraph from Niebuhr's *Letters to a Student of Philology* which has been quoted with the highest praise by Archdeacon Hare and by the Bishop of Carlisle:[1]

Above all things, in every branch of literature and science, ought we to preserve our truth so pure, as utterly to shun all false show,—so as never to assert anything, however slight, for certain, of which we are not thoroughly convinced,—so as to take the utmost pains, when we are expressing a conjecture, to make the degree of unbelief apparent. If we do not, where it is possible, ourselves point out defects which we perceive, and which others are not likely to discover,—if, when we lay down our pen, we cannot say, in the presence of God, I have written nothing knowingly which after a severe

[1] *Parish Sermons*, by Harvey Goodwin, D.D., Dean of Ely (Cambridge, 1862), p. xx.

examination, I do not believe to be true; in nothing have I deceived my reader, either with regard to myself or others; nor have set my odious adversary in any other light than I would answer for at my last hour,—if we cannot do this, learning and literature make us unprincipled and depraved.

In this moral element the ground of Prose is the same as that of Poetry. Mr. M. Arnold (in agreement with M. Edmond Scherer) finds the *Paradise Lost* inferior to the greatest master-pieces 'in the fulfilment of the complete range of conditions which a great poem ought to satisfy,' yet finds in Milton's style an aspect of grandeur so high and rare as to give him rank along with the greatest poets who have ever lived.

Mr. M. Arnold calls Milton 'our great artist in style'; he has 'a master's unfailing touch in diction and in rhythm.' And 'therefore,' he says, 'for the English artist in any line, if he is a true artist, the study of Milton may well have an indescribable attraction.' For the sense of style, he reasons, is deep-seated in human nature, and the gratification of this sense by Milton's poetry is largely the secret of a charm which they feel, rather than recognize or understand. Milton's style is characterized by elevation, and this elevation comes from moral pureness. 'How high, clear, and splendid is his pureness; and how intimately does its might enter into the voice of his poetry!' Professions in this department of morals are not generally very convincing,—it is the singular quality of Milton's professions that they have a stamp of their own in their accent of absolute sincerity. At this elevation his life was really pitched;—'its strong, immortal beauty passed into the diction and rhythm of his poetry.'[1]

Here follows part of the passage which Mr. Arnold has before him when he descants upon Milton's profession of moral purity.

And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he, who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men, or famous cities

[1] *Mixed Essays* (1879), p. 267 ff.

unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy. These reasonings, together with a certain niceness of nature, an honest haughtiness and self-esteem, either of what I was or what I might be (which let envy call pride), and lastly that modesty whereof here I may be excused to make some beseeming profession; all these uniting the supply of their natural aid together kept me still above low descents of mind. Next (for hear me out now, readers), that I may tell you whither my younger feet wandered; I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the expense of his best blood, or of his life if it so befell him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron; from whence even then I learnt what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies by such a dear adventure of themselves had sworn.

To these testimonies I will add a sentence from Macaulay, in his estimate of the writings of Tillotson.

The greatest charm of his compositions, however, is derived from the benignity and candour which appear in every line, and which shone forth not less conspicuously in his life than in his writings.—*History*, c. xiv.

As the relations of Morality to the Art of writing are wide, vague, and indefinite, I have here admitted any illustrations and testimonies which might afford light on the subject or indicate the state of opinion concerning it. But there is a more exact way of contemplating the subject, and to this we will turn for a moment before the close of this chapter. We must consider the ruling motives that come into play in the act of composition itself. Every one who would be a writer is ambitious (we may assume) to attain excellence, perhaps to shine and be distinguished; and in this desire there is a snare. If not duly controlled it may grow to inordinate proportions. It may become a restless impatience to excel, and it may grow into a sort of covetous rapacity. The prevalent educational methods, by referring everything to emulation, tend to stimulate this competitive passion. If a young author yields to this, he cannot have a quiet mind

to give his own genius its fair time for maturing and its proper chance of development, he eagerly clutches at something dashing or dazzling, he masters the successful patterns, and his work becomes a hollow mimicry. Style, to be anything, must be the product of a natural growth and development, and this development is one that takes place by the habit of giving thought its best and most natural expression *pari passu* with the development of the mind. And when I say 'development' I understand the word as it was once defined (in a different connection from the present, it is true,—and yet perhaps not so very different) in a famous *Essay on Development.*

> Development is not an effect of wishing and resolving, or of forced enthusiasm, or of any mechanism of reasoning, or of any mere subtlety of intellect; but comes of its own innate power of expansion within the mind in its season, though with the use of reflection and argument and original thought, more or less as it may happen, with a dependence on the ethical growth of the mind itself, and with a reflex influence upon it.

The whole question of morality in this connection may be brought to the touchstone of honesty, and may be tested by those graces which are the corollaries of honesty, namely modesty and simplicity. The Style should be, like the writer's mind, whole, entire, and single; without vain or over-anxious curiosity in words, without affectation or foppery of phrase, without manifest eclecticism, without any of those things in short, which betray the conscious and designing artist. Not by putting together somewhat you have admired in this author with somewhat you have admired in that author will you ever attain a style which can command or deserve attention. The 'precious' discourse of a 'stylist' is really no style at all; but only a quaint aggregation of artificial and affected mannerisms.

We sometimes hear people speak as if Style were a matter of small importance, a vanity unworthy of the care and attention of a serious man. This strain of talk is such a mixture, has in it so much of the true interwoven with the false, that it is apt to be the more insidious and misleading.

Undoubtedly there is such a thing as a vanity of Style,

and it is a vanity that every sober man will desire to avoid. This is that weakness of the merely belletristic mind, which has a fancy for fine writing, and admires it, and imitates it, and finds readers who can be entertained with a coacervation of sonorous and glittering diction. If this were the meaning of Style, it would be enough to look at it but once, and turn away.

When it is said that a writer should be entirely indifferent to Style, that he should care only about his matter and say it in a straightforward way, and not be solicitous about the air and manner of his composition, there is a confusion of ideas which makes us want to answer Yes and No in the same breath. There are many things about which a wise man is neither indifferent nor solicitous. To be indifferent about money is wrong; to be solicitous about it is equally wrong. Few people undervalue the art of witty conversation, but to pursue it with an anxious spirit is the very way to be tedious. Personal beauty is not a thing to be indifferent to, but it is not to be secured by solicitude about it. So it is in the matter of Style; banish solicitude, be not anxious to shine in style, but at the same time neglect not any reasonable means for the attainment of a real, true, genuine Style.

A genuine and personal Style gives to literature not merely artistic merit, but something more, a touch of nature, an imperishable quality. This it is that renders writings immortal. Without this old literature is vapid. Hence on the one hand the disappointing poverty of many writings that were famous in their day; and hence too, in other instances, the discovery of an author's personality as a perennial quality, like that of Addison in the estimation of Mr. J. R. Green quoted above. When by the mere process of time all interest has faded out of the matter of discourse, when the contention is lost or won and in either case equally dismissed, the faithful impress of the writer's mind once upon the face of the composition will still continue and imperishably remain.

It is quite possible for a writer to have abundance of good

material, to have industry and conscientious research, joined with perfect honesty and sincerity of purpose, and all this in connection with a subject of universal interest and of impressive grandeur;—it is possible for a writer with all these advantages and with a language that has adorned some of the finest prose in the world, to produce a great work and a work of indispensable utility, and yet to miss the honours of an author and to be almost universally neglected. The Greek historian Polybius furnishes a palmary example of the vast importance of Style, as that without which all other advantages together will surely lack their crown. With an 'absorbing passion for truth' he had an 'unfortunate contempt for the artistic presentation of the truth.' 'His sentences trail along without beginning, middle, or end. As long as he can say what he wants to say, the manner has to take care of itself. He writes indeed not so much in a bad style, as with no style at all. The result is that, although hardly any writer has said more interesting things than Polybius, he is tedious and uninteresting as a whole. . . The Nemesis of his contempt for the form and style of his writing has come on Polybius in the neglect which he has experienced at the hands of the modern world.'[1]

Ancient Greece produced three historians who are universally recognized as great, Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius. While every Greek scholar knows Herodotus and Thucydides as a man knows the face of his friend, he is content to know no more of Polybius than the upshot of his record, and this he is thankful to receive from those vicarious readers of documents, the historians, such as Freeman or Mommsen.

Upon this famous historian, who is so conspicuous a beacon of the importance of Style, I cannot refrain from quoting some more of the admirable sentences of Mr. Strachan-Davidson.

His life seems framed as of set purpose to mould the historian who was to bridge over for us the interval between the Greek and the Roman world. With all his excellencies, it is not probable that Polybius will ever be widely read. He cannot command the tones to sway or impress the mind. His book remains a storehouse

[1] Mr. Strachan-Davidson in *Hellenica*, p. 414.

from which the historian and the antiquary may draw, rather than a possession to enrich the mind of the ordinary reader.[1]

Polybius claims a place in the highest rank of ancient historians, and such a claim challenges a comparison with the greatest names —with the severe and stately thought and diction of Thucydides; with Herodotus, who whether by the simplicity of genius, or by art so consummate that the observer cannot distinguish it from nature, delights generation after generation of readers with a tale that leaves nothing to be desired in finish and beauty. It must be confessed that Polybius as a writer cannot stand for a moment in the light of such a comparison. If 'the style is the man' Polybius has no place in the first rank. He has not the genius, and will not take the trouble to acquire the trained sensitiveness of art which might have supplied its place; and thus his writing has no distinction and no charm, and we miss in reading him what gives half their value to great writers—the consciousness that we are in the hands of a master.[2]

When we are upon the subject of great authors whose style has impeded their usefulness, we can hardly fail to think of the author of *The Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature*. Every competent author who has discussed the works of Bishop Butler has professed the highest admiration for his earnestness, sincerity, and candour, in a word, for his single-hearted pursuit of truth; but no one seems to have a good word for his style. According to Sir James Mackintosh he was 'one of the best thinkers and worst writers, being in the latter particular dark and obscure.' Mr. F. D. Maurice said:—'his words often become feeble and contradictory, because he cannot write what is struggling within him.' His defect, if defect it be, is like that of Polybius only in its result, not in its cause. So far from being due to negligence it arises from the absorbing demand of a special carefulness about propriety and fitness for his occasion. He was himself apprehensive that he did not write in a popular or attractive manner. He thought the nature of his subject hardly admitted of it. The ideas with which he was dealing had not a mature and well-defined terminology. Indeed, he implies

[1] 'Polybius,' in *Hellenica*, p. 387.
[2] *Id.* p. 416.

that it is not in the nature of things that they should be capable of exact definition. In such subjects, 'ideas are never in themselves determinate, but become so by the train of reasoning and the place they stand in; since it is impossible words can always stand for the same ideas even in the same author, much less in different ones.'

A certain embarrasment which is manifest in his style may be accounted for by the nature of his task. He compelled himself to take common ground with those against whom he argued, and with this view he avoided the current terms of dogmatic theology: in other words, he denied himself the use of that phraseology which was familiar and natural to him. He would use no expression which might be disallowed by the sceptics of his day; he would employ no language which might lay him open to the charge of begging the question; and by these hard conditions self-imposed, he is sometimes driven to the employment of a circuitous phraseology, which is a great impediment to lucidity of diction. In the first chapter of the *Analogy* he is so extremely careful to discuss the question of a future life on a purely neutral ground, that he does not so much as allow himself to use the word 'soul,' but substitutes ungainly phrases for it, at one time 'living powers,' at another time 'faculties of perception and action.' Certain principles, such as the liberty of the will and moral fitness, have been so generally admitted by moralists, ancient and modern, that this general understanding is implied in their very language, 'and probably,' he adds, 'it may appear in mine, though I have endeavoured to avoid it, and in order to avoid it, have sometimes been obliged to express myself in a manner which will appear strange to such as do not observe the reason for it.' In fact, Butler tried to keep in a purely intellectual sphere and to be rigidly demonstrative; and it is difficult if not impossible to be attractive and engaging under such conditions. His style is one from which feeling and imagination are as far as possible excluded, and this unnatural condition gives it that 'dryness' which has often been alleged against it. There is an expression by Mr. Aubrey Moore which though used by him in another connection is very convenient here. He said, that it is impossible to 'shut up reason to the compart-

ment of the intellect.'[1] Of this happy remark Butler's style affords a good illustration.

But whether this be or be not a full and sufficient account of the defect of style which all seem agreed to charge upon Bishop Butler, one thing at least is quite certain, that it must not be ascribed to any negligence on his part or to any deficiency in his sense of the importance of clearness in writing. He has himself said enough to satisfy us on this head.[2]

> Confusion and perplexity in writing is indeed without excuse; because any one may, if he pleases, know whether he understands and sees through what he is about; and it is unpardonable for a man to lay his thoughts before others when he is conscious that he himself does not know whereabouts he is, or how the matter before him stands. It is coming abroad in disorder, which he ought to be dissatisfied to find himself in at home.

But however much we may exculpate the author, however much we may find explanation or justification in the conditions of his task, none the less does that remain true which it is our main business to observe here, namely, that the crudeness of the style has interfered with the usefulness of the work. If we consider the treasure of thought in his writings, he must be counted among great authors who are neglected. It is not many years ago since Mr. Gladstone expressed himself to this effect; saying that the English people little knew what a treasure they possessed and neglected in the works of Bishop Butler.

And even of those who read him, there are but few who persevere long enough to understand his drift and meaning. My own impression is that if we except those who at some period of life have been obliged by duty to others to master Butler's argument, the number of those who are acquainted with it is very small indeed. I have seen it said (in a page which made it the more astonishing) that Butler rested the proof of religion upon analogy:—whereas he uses the arguments from analogy solely to remove stumbling blocks.

[1] *Lux Mundi*, p. 67.

[2] In this section I have been indebted to a little book on Bishop Butler in Professor Knight's series of *Philosophical Classics* by the Rev. W. Lucas Collins (Blackwood, 1881).

After all the complaint against Butler's style, it is no more than mere justice to add that however his Diction may be constrained, it is thoroughly genuine in the sense that it is his own, and has grown with his thought; insomuch that any one who is acquainted with his works cannot fail to recognize anything of his. Moreover, it is among the most idiomatic of the prose of the eighteenth century.

A marked example of the importance of style, and one of a different character from either of the above, is that of Madame D'Arblay, which has been rendered famous by Macaulay in a well-known essay. In Frances Burney we see an author whose early works were a brilliant success, and yet her later works were a conspicuous failure; and this, not from any decay of power, but from an unfortunate affectation of Style. Macaulay says:—'Madame D'Arblay's style underwent a gradual and most pernicious change, a change which, in degree at least, we believe to be unexampled in literary history.' The fact is, her youthful writings had a charming vivacity with a perfectly natural unconsciousness of manner; but when she grew famous, she became self-conscious and began to think about her style, and then she became modish and affected, and fell into the Euphuism of the time, which ruined all her literary work. 'In an evil hour the author of *Evelina* took the *Rambler* for her model. This would not have been wise even if she could have imitated her pattern as well as Hawkesworth did. But such imitation was beyond her power. She had her own style. It was a tolerably good one, and might, without any violent change, have been improved into a very good one. She determined to throw it away, and to adopt a style in which she could attain excellence only by achieving an almost miraculous victory over nature and over habit. She could cease to be Fanny Burney; it was not so easy to become Samuel Johnson.'

This deterioration was still further aggravated by circumstances which naturally followed the marriage of Fanny Burney with a Frenchman. 'But there was to be a still deeper descent. After the publication of *Camilla*, Madame D'Arblay resided ten years at Paris. During those years

there was scarcely any intercourse between France and England. It was with difficulty that a short letter could occasionally be transmitted. All Madame D'Arblay's companions were French. She must have written, spoken, thought, in French. Ovid expressed his fear that a shorter exile might have affected the purity of his Latin. During a shorter exile, Gibbon unlearned his native English. Madame D'Arblay had carried a bad style to France. She brought back a style which we are really at a loss to describe. It is a sort of broken Johnsonese, a barbarous *patois*, bearing the same relation to the language of *Rasselas* which the gibberish of the negroes of Jamaica bears to the English of the House of Lords. Sometimes it reminds us of the finest, that is to say, the vilest parts, of Mr. Galt's novels; sometimes of the perorations of Exeter Hall; sometimes of the leading articles of the *Morning Post*. But it most resembles the puffs of Mr. Rowland and Dr. Goss. It matters not what ideas are clothed in such a style. The genius of Shakspeare and Bacon united, would not save a work so written from general derision.'

Macaulay justified his criticisms by a series of quotations which we can now complete by means of early diaries lately (1889) for the first time published by Messrs. Bell under the editorship of Mrs. Ellis.

I have the pleasure of being able to set before the reader three examples of Miss Burney's earliest style, which have been selected for me by Mrs. Ellis herself. The first was written when Fanny was nearly seventeen, in the

Spring of 1769.

We have a library which is an everlasting resource when attack'd by the spleen—I have always a sufficiency of work to spend, if I pleased, my whole time at it—Musick is a feast which can never grow insipid—and, in short, I have all the reason that ever mortal had to be contented with my lot—and I *am* contented with, and I am grateful for it. If few people are more happy, few are more sensible of their happiness.—*Early Diary of Frances Burney*. Edited by Annie Raine Ellis; vol. i. p. 42.

The next piece was written two months before she was nineteen.

May 8, 1771.

Mrs. Garrick is the most attentively polite and perfectly well-bred woman in the world; her speech is all softness; her manners, all elegance; her smiles, all sweetness. There is something so peculiarly graceful in her motion, and pleasing in her address, that the most trifling words have weight and power, when spoken by her, to oblige, and even delight.

The third piece was written about a month before her mention of having begun a correspondence with Mr. Crisp; an important epoch in her literary career, as being the earliest moment at which we can suppose her to have had a consciousness of writing for *a public*, or at least for readers. These three pieces were all written within the early period when her Diary was seen by no one but herself, unless it were the sister who was her *confidante*, Susan.

April 1773.

We . . . had a long visit to-day from . . . Richard Burney of Worcester, Junior,[1] a young man of very uncommon talents and parts, and of the utmost sweetness of disposition. But unluckily for his fortitude of mind or modesty of character, he is so handsome, and so lively and amusing, from never-failing spirits, that he is quite spoiled, and seems at times to be made up of self-admiration; yet at others he laughs at his own foppery as cordially as his most sarcastic censurers; and then he will take himself off in his high airs as drolly and gaily, as he takes off, with incomparable mimicry, the airs of his neighbours.

I add another extract from the year 1773.

We have just finished the *Henriade*. I am not absolutely in raptures with it; I think Voltaire has made much too free with religion in giving words to the Almighty. I doat on poetry; but cannot allow of even poetical licence giving languages human to the Divine Power. For which reason I am more attached to poetry concerning fabulous times; for Jove, Juno, Minerva, Venus, may talk as much as they please, I am never hurt even at their quarrelling. But a man pretending to believe in revealed Religion, to presume to dictate sentiments to his maker—I cannot think it right.—*The Early Diary of Frances Burney*. Edited by Mrs. Ellis, 1889; vol. i. p. 213.

[1] Her first cousin.

Next follows a selection of the examples by which Macaulay demonstrated how widely Madame D'Arblay's three styles differed from one another. The first is from *Evelina*.

1778.

Mrs. Selwyn is very kind and attentive to me. She is extremely clever. Her understanding, indeed, may be called masculine; but unfortunately her manners deserve the same epithet; for, in studying to acquire the knowledge of the other sex, she has lost all the softness of her own. In regard to myself, however, as I have neither courage nor inclination to argue with her, I have never been personally hurt at her want of gentleness, a virtue which nevertheless seems so essential a part of the female character, that I find myself more awkward and less at ease with a woman who wants it more than I do with a man.'

Her second style is displayed in *Cecilia*, which was written during her intimacy with Johnson, but without his literary assistance, as Mr. Seeley has pointed out.[1]

1782.

Even the imperious Mr. Delville was more supportable here than in London. Secure in his own castle, he looked round him with a pride of power and possession which softened while it swelled him. His superiority was undisputed: his will was without control. He was not, as in the great capital of the kingdom, surrounded by competitors. No rivalry disturbed his peace; no equality mortified his greatness. All he saw were either vassals of his power, or guests bending to his pleasure. He abated, therefore, considerably the stern gloom of his haughtiness, and soothed his proud mind by the courtesy of condescension.

The third style is represented by a passage from the *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, in which the authoress narrates the sufferings and disappointment of her father when he got an attack of rheumatism as he was returning, full of projects, from a continental tour.

1832.

He was assaulted, during his precipitated return, by the rudest fierceness of wintry elemental strife; through which, with bad ac-

[1] *Fanny Burney and her Friends*, by L. B. Seeley, 1890.

commodations and innumerable accidents, he became a prey to the merciless pangs of the acutest spasmodic rheumatism, which barely suffered him to reach his home, ere, long and piteously, it confined him, a tortured prisoner, to his bed. Such was the check that almost instantly curbed, though it could not subdue, the rising pleasure of his hopes of entering upon a new species of existence—that of an approved man of letters; for it was on the bed of sickness, exchanging the light wines of France, Italy, and Germany, for the black and loathsome potions of the Apothecaries' Hall, writhed by darting stitches, and burning with fiery fever, that he felt the full force of that sublunary equipoise that seems evermore to hang suspended over the attainment of long-sought and uncommon felicity, just as it is ripening to burst forth with long enjoyment!

From the failure of Madame D'Arblay's later writings, some people inferred that she was from the first an overrated writer, incapable of maintaining a reputation which had originally been due to chance and fashion. Macaulay combated this inference. Her early popularity was the just reward of distinguished merit, and would never have been eclipsed, if she had been content with her own province. She failed because she attempted to occupy a province that was not hers, and withal she incurred a reproach which is common to her with other distinguished persons. 'Bentley failed when he turned from Homer and Aristophanes, to edit the *Paradise Lost.* Inigo failed when he attempted to rival the Gothic churches of the fourteenth century. Wilkie failed when he took it into his head that the Blind Fiddler and the Rent Day were unworthy of his powers, and challenged competition with Lawrence as a portrait painter.' We conclude that the moral to be drawn from the example before us is one that has been repeatedly urged in this treatise, namely, that in order to form and retain a genuine style an author must be simple, unaffected, and natural.

Mr. Pater has called Prose literature the characteristic art of the Nineteenth century, as others have assigned that place to Music.

Music and prose literature are, in one sense, the opposite terms of art; the art of literature presenting to the imagination, through

the intelligence, a range of interests, as free and various as those which music presents to it through sense.

There is however a tendency in literature to approach if not quite to assume those conditions which make of music *the* art *par excellence*.

If music be the ideal of all art whatever precisely because in music it is impossible to distinguish the form from the substance or matter, the subject from the expression; then, literature, by finding its specific excellence in the absolute correspondence of the term to its import, will be but fulfilling the conditions of all artistic quality in things everywhere of all good art.[1]

In these thoughtful sentences there is so much to be admired that I regret to have to qualify my acceptance of them with any modification. But by placing the source of literary excellence in a correspondence between term and import, the author seems to me to follow his French examples with too great obsequiousness, and to reduce, like Gustave Flaubert, the whole of Style to the skill of securing the happy word. It has been a leading aim of this treatise to contend against everything that claims to be a specific recipe, and to exhibit the great diversity of the elements which go to make up a literary Style; and in order that these may all have their due consideration, I have assigned a chapter apart to each of those nine aspects which I have selected, not only as being the most obvious or conspicuous, but also as presenting the elements most necessary and essential to the growth of an individual Style.

[1] *Appreciations*, p. 35.

CHAPTER X

THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PROSE—TO ITS FIRST CULMINATION

English Prose no recent development—The chief aim and some incidental purposes of these three historical Chapters.
English Prose of the Eighth Century—Indications and relics of earlier culture.
English Prose of the Ninth Century—Historical significance of the passage quoted—The elevation of Alfred's English—Benefit of contact with Latin.
English Prose of the Tenth Century—The first Culmination of English Prose—Copiousness of the extant literature—Early beginnings of humouristic writing—The pertinency of this period as a model.
English Prose of the Eleventh Century—Continuity of the diction of the Tenth Century.

Seules, la Grèce ancienne, la France et l'Angleterre modernes, offrent une série complète de grands monuments expressifs.—H. Taine, *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise* (1863), Introduction, p. xlvii.

In the ancient world Greece, in the modern world France and England—these, and these alone, can shew a complete series of great and characteristic writings.

THERE exists a general impression among educated Englishmen that our prose literature dates from the sixteenth century Even though they may be acquainted with earlier specimens such as the prose of Wiclif or of Fortescue, this does not affect their general impression. They seem tacitly to imagine that any such phenomena are chance sporadic things, accidental, abnormal, mere unaccountable freaks and sports of capricious Nature:—that in some way or other they are exceptional and do not count. It will, I fear, sound strange if I assert that we possess a longer pedigree of prose literature than any other country in Europe, and that if we seek to trace it up to its starting point, we are not brought to a stand until we have mounted up to the very earliest times, past the threshold of English Christianity, out into the heathen times beyond, and are close up to the first struggle of the invasion.

It is not without benefit to the writer that he should have a due respect for the antiquity of his language, and I hope that the historical sketch here to follow will have somewhat of that effect.

But though I certainly attach importance to the high pedigree of our prose, I do not regard the demonstration thereof as the main purpose of this chapter. I have a more important purpose to serve, and one that is more organic to the pervading argument of this treatise. I shall pass lightly over much that may be tempting to dwell on, in order that I may bring out in due relief one chief consideration. All the stream of this history is not of equally ready application to living usage, and it is upon this that I keep my eye. There are certain epochs at which the language has culminated into a standard;—a standard which has retained its literary value for generations and for centuries. It is to such epochs that I attach importance and that I now invite particular attention.

I shall not begin at the very beginning, but I shall pass over the obscure though well-evidenced remains of the fifth and sixth centuries, nor shall I even tarry to notice more than cursorily the Code of Laws of King Ine which belongs to the seventh century. I shall not begin the survey until we come down to a time where our materials are unquestionably adequate, a time in which we can produce a sustained and continuous narrative in prose, and that is in the eighth century. Brief as our sketch must be, it will afford (besides the main purpose above indicated) fit and natural occasion for some incidental observations, cognate to our drift. I allude especially to the relative status of French and German Prose, matters which an Englishman, who cares to know about English Prose, cannot very well ignore. Perhaps we may find that a glance at the prose of others will help us to understand better, and to form a more worthy estimate of our own.

But there is another kind of incidental comparison that we shall strike upon in the course of this chapter, I mean the comparison between Poetry and Prose, a matter too great to pursue, and too vital to be neglected. To think of these

two chief forms of literature as if they went each its own way without heed or relation between them, would be a great mistake and one very impoverishing to our enquiry. If our main purpose, as indicated above, is the most directly pertinent to our aim, this, of all incidental considerations, is the one that most enriches the investigation.

The Eighth Century.

The earliest date at which the extant writings allow us to see our language displayed with something like literary competency, is in the Eighth century. In that century we have adequate specimens both of poetry and of prose. What strikes us most forcibly at this date is the great disparity of condition between the two. This is a point worthy to fix our attention, for the key of literature is largely to be found in the shifting relations between poetry and prose. Prose is the younger form of literature, which by its slow expansion from a minor, an inferior, and even a dubious function, has conquered a width of domain which sometimes has almost seemed to leave no place for its elder sister and to threaten the cessation of poetry. Poetry and prose are the two prime factors of literature, and the changes they have undergone in themselves and relatively to one another must be counted among the foremost literary phenomena of each successive era.

At our first adequate prospect of English literature, which, as I have said, is in the Eighth century, the contrast between the poetry and the prose is exceedingly striking. The poetry has absolutely culminated, it is quite mature and ripe, and it has reached the highest perfection of which it was capable under the conditions by which its growth was then defined. The prose, on the contrary, though no longer in its infancy, but already robust and vigorous, yet appears so uncouth and rude as to intimate that it was not many generations remove from the early beginnings of sustained discourse.

Our first example of Eighth century prose shall be from a legal document of about the year 744. In this deed Aethelbald, king of the Mercians, remits certain port-dues at London-town hythe in favour of the bishop of Worcester.

✠ In usses dryhtnes noman haelendes Cristes ic Aeðelbald Myrcna cincg waes beden from þaem arfullan bisceope Milrede þaett ic him alefde and his þaem halegan hirede alle nedbade tuegra sceopa þe þaerto limpende beoð þett ic him forgefe þa þaem eadigan Petre apostola aldormen in þaem mynstre þeowiað þaet is geseted in Huicca maegðe in þaere stowe þe mon hateð Weogernacester. Þaere bene swyðe arfulle geðafunge ic waes syllende for minre sawle laecedome to ðon þaett for minum synnum hi heo geeaðmedden þaette heo waeren gelomlice þingeras wið drihten. Swyðe lustfullice þa forgeofende ic him alyfde alle nedbade tuegra sceopa þa þe þaer abaedde beoð from þaem nedbaderum in Lundentunes hyðe ond naefre ic ne mine lastweardas ne ða nedbaderas geðristlaecen þat heo hit onwenden oððe þon wiðgaen. Gif heo þat nyllen syn heo þonne amansumade from daelneomencge liceman and blodes usses drihtnes haelendes Cristes and from alre neweste geleafulra syn heo asceadene and asyndrade nymðe heo hit her mid þingonge bote gebete.—*A Handbook to the Land Charters &c.* by J. Earle, (*Clarendon Press*, 1888), p. 42.

✠ In the name of our Lord and Saviour Christ I Aethelbald king of the Mercians have been requested by the pious bishop Milred that I would remit to him and to his religious society all tolls upon two ships belonging to the same; that I would make the concession to those who serve the blessed Peter the chief of the apostles in that minster which is planted in the Hwiccas district in the place called Worcester. To that petition I gave a very gracious assent for my soul's healing, to the end that they might condescend to be frequent intercessors with the Lord for my sins. Most heartily therefore have I conceded and remitted all the tolls upon two ships which are there levied by the collectors in London-town hythe; and never I, nor my successors, nor the collectors, attempt to alter this or to oppose it. If they reject that, be they therefore excommunicated from participation of the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Christ; and from all the company of the faithful be they severed and sundered, unless they in this world make amends with prayer and penance.

Another specimen, taken from the Saxon Chronicle for the year 755, exhibits the historical prose of the Eighth century in the Wessex dialect.

And þa ongeat se cyning þæt,	And then the king perceived

and he on þa duru eode, and þa unheanlice hine werede, oþ he on þone æþeling locude, and þa utræsde on hine, and hine miclum gewundode. And hie alle on þone cyning wærun feohtende oþ þæt hie hine ofslægenne hæfdon. And þa on þæs wifes gebærum onfundon þæs cyninges þegnas þa unstilnesse, and þa þider urnon swa hwelc swa þonne gearo wearþ and radost; and hiera se æþeling gehwelcum feoh and feorh gebead, and hiera nænig hit geþicgean nolde: ac hie simle feohtende wæran oþ hie alle lægon butan anum Bryttiscum gisle, and se swiþe gewundad wæs. Ða on morgenne gehierdun þæt þæs cyninges þegnas þe him be æftan wærun þæt se cyning ofslægen wæs, þa ridon hie þider, and his aldormon Osric, and Wiferþ his þegn, and þa men þe he be æftan him læfde ær, and þone æþeling on þære byrig metton þær se cyning ofslægen læg, and þa gatu him to belocen hæfdon and þa þær to eodon; and þa gebead he him hiera agenne dom feos and londes gif hie him þæs rices upon, and him cyþdon þæt hiera mægas him mid wæron þa þe him from noldon;

and þa cuædon hie þæt him nænig mæg leofra nære þonne hiera hlaford, and hie næfre his banan folgian noldon; and þa budon hie hiera mæ um

that, and he went to the door and there valiantly defended himself, until he looked upon the etheling, and then he rushed out on him, and sorely wounded him. And they were all fighting against the king until they had slain him. And then through the woman's cries the king's thanes became aware of the commotion, and then they ran to the spot each one as he was ready and quickest; and the etheling proffered each one of them life and money, and not one of them would accept it; but they continued fighting till they all lay dead but one, a British hostage, and he was badly wounded. In the morning when the king's thanes who had stayed behind, heard that the king was slain, they forthwith rode thither, and Osric his aldorman, and Wilferth a thane of his, and those men whom he had previously left behind him, and they found the etheling in the burgh where the king lay slain, and they had locked the gates about them, and the others went at them; and then did he proffer them their own terms of money and land if they would grant him the kingdom, and they told them that their kinsmen were with them and would not quit them; and then said they [on the other side] that no kinsman was dearer to them than their lord, and they never would follow his banesman; and then they offered

þæt hie gesunde from eodon; and hie cuædon þæt tæt ilce hiera geferum geboden wære, þe ær mid þam cyninge wærun; þa cuædon hie þæt hie hie þæs ne onmunden þon ma þe eowre geferan þe mid þam cyninge ofslægene wærun. And hie þa ymb þa gatu feohtende wæron oþþæt hie þær inne fulgon, and þone æþeling ofslogon, and þa men þe him mid wærun alle butan anum, se wæs þæs aldor monnes god sunu.

their kinsmen to come away while they were sound; and they [the relatives] said that that same offer had been made to their mates who had been with the king; they said moreover that they should mind that [offer] 'no more than did your mates who were slain with the king.' And they then were fighting about the gates until they got inside; and they slew the etheling, and those men who were with him, all but one; he was the aldorman's godson.

No one can study these paragraphs without discerning in them the evidence of a literary tradition which is already of mature standing. The syntax is not more rugged than that of Thucydides. It corresponds well to the time which produced it, in which brief efforts of diction had been long familiar, but a sustained narrative not often attempted in writing. Each of the three precedent centuries has left us something in short paragraphs, and of the seventh century we have a code of laws.

The Ninth Century.

From the Eighth we pass at one stride to the closing years of the Ninth century, over an interval of destruction and desolation. The scourge of the Denish invasions is of the greatest consequence in the history of the English Language and Literature. It destroyed the whole previous institution of learned education, banished Latin from the land, and made it necessary to employ the vernacular much more than heretofore in matters civil and ecclesiastical.

Alfred in the Preface to his Translation of Gregory's *Pastoral Care* reviews the great change that had come over the English nation in the matter of culture and education. This Preface is a document of the very highest quality, and cannot be too often quoted, or too heartily recommended to the

reader. In the course of a series of regretful memories the royal author proceeds as follows:—

. . . and hu man utanbordes wisdom and lare hieder on londe sohte, and hu we hie nu sceoldon ute begietan gif we hie habban sceoldon. Swæ clæne hio wæs oðfeallenu on Angelcynne þæt swiðe feawa wæron behionan Humbre þe hiora þeninga cuðen understondan on Englisc, oþþe furþum an ærendgewrit of Lædene on Englisc areccean; and ic wene þæt noht monige begiondan Humbre næren. Swæ feawa hiora wæron þæt ic furþum anne anlepne ne mæg gepencean be suþan Temese þa þa ic to rice feng. Gode ælmihtegum sie þonc þæt we nu ænigne on stal habbað lareowa.

. . . and how people from abroad came to this land for wisdom and instruction; and how we now should have to get them abroad if we were going to have them. So clean was it fallen away in the Angle race, that there were very few on this side Humber who would know how to render their Services in English, or so much as translate an epistle out of Latin into English; and I ween that not many would be on the other side Humber. So few of them were there that I cannot think of so much as a single one south of Thames when I took to the realm. God Almighty be thanked that we have now any teachers in office.

The decay of learning here deplored is a matter of chief interest in our history. For it was the general loss of Latin that suggested translations, and caused them to be pushed forward with an energy which surprizes us to this day. It caused a movement which transferred the bulk of English culture from the learned language to the vernacular. Looked at in this view the writings of Alfred, whether original or translations, assume additional significance for us. We see in them the outburst of that effort after a national literature, which bore mature fruit in the next century.

In Alfred's own native prose there is a fine unconscious strength and dignity;—a very genuine elevation without strain or effort. As we have a considerable quantity of his undoubted original composition to put by the side of the translations, we can see pretty plainly what it was that English prose had to gain from contact with the Latin. It was not elevation; elevation comes of itself to all earnest single-

hearted minds that are sensible of a vocation and are gifted with power ;—but it was the lucidity of a maturer syntax, that heritage of a logical evolution of thought which still makes one of the chief advantages of Latin composition to the tiro of the present day.

Before the end of this Ninth century we have anonymous annals of great excellence and in considerable detail. The following is a specimen.

Ðy ilcan geare drehton þa hergas on East Englum and on Northhymbrum West Seaxna lond swiþe be þæm suþ stæþe . mid stæl hergum . ealra swiþust mid þæm æscum þe hie fela geara ær timbredon. Ða het Alfred cyng timbran lang scipu ongen þa æscas . þa wæron fulneah tu swa lange swa þa oþru . sume hæfdon lx ara . sume ma. Ða wæron ægðer ge swiftran ge unwealtran . ge eac hieran þonne þa oþru. Næron nawðer ne on Fresisc gescæpene . ne on Denisc . bute swa him selfum þuhte ðæt hie nytwyrþoste beon meahten.

That same year the armies in East Anglia and in Northhymbria distressed the land of the West Saxons very much about the south coast with marauding invasions: most of all with the 'æscas' that they had built many years before. Then king Alfred gave orders to build long ships against the 'æscas' [Denish ships so called]; those were well-nigh twice as long as the others; some had 60 oars, some more. Those were both swifter and steadier, and at the same time higher than the others. They were not shaped either on the Frisic or on the Denish model, but as he himself considered that they might be most serviceable.

In such prose as this we feel the personality of the author, although we cannot assign him a name. It is not too much to say that from the end of the Ninth century English prose appears in such a state of maturity as to be capable of the attribution of 'Style.'

The Tenth Century.

The Tenth century was an age of new vigour, activity, and progress, in every department of the national life, military, political, social, ecclesiastical, and literary. It is one of the

three chief Epochs in the growth of the English language. Now for the first time a standard was attained, which steadied and consolidated and fixed the language for a century and a half, and which was looked back to and recognized and imitated even after the bulk of the language had long passed into new and strange phases. Here it will not be sufficient to give a single specimen or even two; we must take enough to at least suggest the great variety of the fields in which at that time English Prose was exercised.

We will begin with one of the genuine Land Charters; almost the only one of which we possess an entire translation by the skilful hand of J. M. Kemble.

[Eadgar was king when the lands at Send and Sunbury were bought by Dunstan in the manner related.]

Se fruma waes ðaet mon forstæl ænne wimman æt Icceslea Ælfsige Byrhsiges suna: Ðurwif hatte se wimman. Ða befeng Ælfsige ðone mann æt Wulfstane Wulfgares fader. Ða tymde Wulfstan hine to Æðelstane æt Sunnanbyrg. Ða cende he tem. let ðone forberstan . forbeh ðone andagen. Æfter ðam bæd Ælfsige ægiftes his mannes . and he hine agif and forgeald him mid twam pundum. Ða bæd Byrhferð ealdormann Æþelstan hys wer for ðam tembyrste. Ða cwæð Æþelstan ðæt he næfde him to syllane. Ða cleopode Eadweard Æþelstanes broðor, and cwæð, ic hæbbe Sunnanburges boc ðe uncre yldran me læfdon, læt me ðæt land to handa ic agife þinne wer þam cynge. Ða cwæð Æðelstan ðæt

The beginning was that some one stole away a woman at Icceslea from Ælfsig, Byrhtsige's son: the woman's name was Thurwif. Then Ælfsige detected the person in the possession of Wulfstan Wulfgar's father. And Wulfstan *teamed* her to Æðelstan at Sunbury.[1] Then he gave notice of *Team* but let it go by default, and did not appear at the term. After that Ælfsige claimed his property, and he gave it up, and paid him damages with two pounds. Then Byrhtferð the ealdorman sued Æðelstan for his wergyld for making default of *team*. Then said Æðelstan that he had no means to pay with. Then called out Eadweard, Æðelstan's brother, and said 'I have the charter of Sunbury, which my ancestors left me; give me the

[1] He claimed to have acquired her from Æthelstan, and Æthelstan acknowledged the truth of Wulfstan's reference to him, and professed himself ready to prove his ownership, but when the day came he did not appear.

him leofre wære ðæt hit to fyre oððe flode gewurde. ðonne he hit æfre gebide: ða cwæð Eadweard hit is wyrse ðæt uncer naðor hit næbbe: ða wæs ða swa. and forbead Byrhferð ðæt land Æðelstane. and he offerde and gebeh under Wulfgare æt Norð healum.

Binnan ðam wendun gewyrda, and gewat Eadred cyng: and feng Eadwig to rice, and wende Æðelstan hine eft into Sunnanbyrg. ungebetra þinga. Ða geahsode ðæt Eadwig cyng and gesealde ðæt land Byrnrice. and he feng to and wearf Æðelstan ut.

Gemang ðam getidde ðæt Myrce gecuran Eadgar to cynge. and him anweald gesealdan ealra cynerihta. ða gesohte Æðelstan Eadgar cyng and bæd domes. ða ætdemdon him Myrena witan land buton he his wer agulde ðam cynge swa he oðrum ær sceolde. ða næfde he hwanon. ne he hit Eadweardе his breðer geðafian nolde. ða gesealde se cyng. and gebecte ðæt land Æðelstane ealdormenn. to hæbbenne, and to syllanne for life and for legere ðam him leofost wære. æfter ðam getidde ðæt Ecgferð gebohte boc and land æt Æðelstane ealdormenn. on cynges gewitnesse and his witena swa his gemedo wæron. hæfde

possession of the land into my hand, and I will pay the king your wergyld.' Then said Æðelstan that he would rather it should all sink in fire or flood, than that he should ever abide that. Then said Eadweard, 'It would be worse, that neither of us should have it.' Then was it so, and Byrhtferð forbade Æðelstan the land, and he decamped, and took service under Wulfgar at Northhale.

Meanwhile fortune changed. and king Eadred died, and Eadwig succeeded to his kingdom, and Æðelstan returned to Sunbury, without having mended the matter. Then Eadwig the king discovered that, and gave the land to Beornric, and he took possession and cast Æðelstan out.

Meanwhile it happened that the Mercians elected Eadgar king, and gave him the power to exercise all the rights of royalty. Then Æðelstan sought king Eadgar, and demanded judgment: and the witan of Mercia condemned him to forfeit the land, unless he paid his wergyld to the king, as he should have done to the other, before. Then had he no means, nor would he allow his brother Eadweard to do it. Then the king gave and booked the land to Æðelstan the ealdorman, to have and to give, in life and in death to whom he best pleased. After that it befell that Ecgferð bought the charter and land from Æðelstan the ealdor-

and breac oð his ende. ða betæhte Ecgferð on halre tungan. land and boc on cynges gewitnesse Dunstane arcebisceope to mundgenne his lafe and his bearne.

Ða he geendod wæs ða rad se bisceop to ðam cynge. myngude ðære munde and his gewitnesse. ða cwæð se cyng him to andsware. mine witan habbað ætreeð Ecgferðe ealle his are. þurh ðæt swyrd ðe him on hype hangode ða he adranc. nam ða se cyng ða are ðe he ahte. xx. hyda æt Sendan. x. æt Sunnanbyrg. and forgef Ælfhege earldormenn. Ða bead se bisceop his wer ðam cynge. ða cwæð se cyng. ðæt mihte beon geboden him wið clænum legere. ac ic hæbbe ealle ða spæce to Ælfhege læten.

Ðæs on syxtan gere gebohte se arcebisceop æt Ælfhege ealdormenn. ðæt land æt Sendan. mid xc. pundum. and æt Sunnanbyrg mid cc. mancussan goldes unbecwedene. and unforbodene. wið ælene mann to ðære ðægtide and he him swa ða landgeagnian derr. swa him se sealde ðe to syllene ahte. and he ðam se cyng sealde. swa hí him his witan gerehton.—*Handbook to Land Charters*, p. 201.

man, by witness of the king and his witan, as his covenants were; he had and enjoyed it to his end. Then did Ecgferð *with a whole tongue* bequeath land and book to Archbishop Dunstan, by witness of the king, in trust for his widow and child.

And when he was dead, the bishop rode to the king and put him in mind of the trust and of his testimony; then did the king give him this answer, 'My witan have deprived Ecgferð of all his estate, by the sword that hung on his hip when he was drowned.' Then the king took all the estate he had, twenty hides at Send, ten at Sunbury, and gave them to Ælfheah the ealdorman. Then did the bishop tender his wergyld to the king; then said the king, that that might be offered him, in consideration of a grave in consecrated ground: but he had given over the whole discussion to Ælfheah.

In the sixth year after this, the archbishop bought the land at Send of Ælfheah the ealdorman, for ninety pounds, and that at Sunbury for two hundred mancusses of gold, unbeclaimed and unforbid, against every man soever up to that date and he warranted him the lands as his property, even as he had given it him that had it to give, and as the king had granted them to him, even as his witan had adjudged [them].—From the *Archæological Journal*, 1857.

Bible translations were a feature of the time. The Old Testament work is not so close to the original as to render a modern version superfluous; and therefore with the following short specimen, from portions of Genesis xliii. and xliv.—the story of Joseph and his brethren—I join a translation taken from a little book by Mr. E. Maunde Thompson, now the Head Librarian of the British Museum.

Soþlice hi ledon forð heora lac ongean þæt Iosep ineode; and feollon on þa eorþan and geeaðmeddon wiþ hine. Iosep hi oncneow ða arfullice, and axode hi hwæþer heora fæder wære hal, þe hi him foresædon, oþþe hwæðer he leofode. Þa cwædon hi: Gesund is þin þeow ure fæder, gyt he leofaþ. Ða Iosep geseah his gemeddredan broþor Beniamin, þa cwæþ he: Is þis se cnapa þe ge me foresædon? And eft he cwæþ: God gemiltsige þe, sunu min; and he wearð swa swiðe astyrod þæt him feollon tearas for his broþor þingon, and he eode into his bedcleofan and weop. And þa he þæs geswac, þa eode he ut to him, and hi æton, onsundron þa Egyptiscean; hit næs na alifed þæt hi ætgædere æton. And hi man oferdrencte.

Soothly they brought forth their gift against Joseph came in, and they fell to the earth and made obeisance unto him. Joseph greeted them graciously, and asked them whether their father were hale, of whom they spake to him before, or whether he lived. Then quoth they: 'Thy servant our father is well, he yet liveth.' When Joseph beheld his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, then quoth he: 'Is this the lad of whom ye spake to me before?' And again he quoth: 'God be gracious unto thee, my son.' And he was so strongly stirred that his tears fell for his brother's sake, and he went into his bedchamber and wept. And when he ceased therefrom, then went he out unto them, and they did eat, the Egyptians apart; it was not allowed that they should eat together. And they did give them much drink.

Ða bead Iosep his gerefan and cwæþ: Fille heora saccas mid hwæte, and lege heora ælces feoh on his agenne sac, and nim minne sylfrenan læfel and þæs hwætes wurð þe he sealde, and

Then bade Joseph his steward and quoth: 'Fill their sacks with wheat, and lay every one his money in his own sack, and take my silver cup and the price of the wheat which he paid and put

do on þæs gyngestan sacc. And he dyde swa.

them in the sack of the youngest.' And he did so.

From *Wycliffe Exhibition in the King's Library. Arranged by E. M. Thompson, Keeper of the MSS.*, 1884.

The New Testament work, although done from a Latin Version, is so near to the original, and so like the run of our present English Bible, that every reader will be able to follow it without exerting his mind beyond the point of pleasureable effort.

St. Mark vi. 1–11.

And þa he þanon eode, he ferde on his eþel, and him folgedon hys leorning cnyhtas. 2. And gewordenum reste dæge, he ongan on gesomnunge læran; and mænige gehyrdon, and wundredon on his lare, and cwædon: Hwanon synd þyssum ealle þas þing? and hwæt ys se wisdom þe hym geseald ys, and swylce mihta þe þurh his handa gewordene synd? 3. Hu nys þys se smið, Marian sunu, Iacobes broðer, and Iosepes, and Iude, and Simonis? hu ne synd hys swustra her mid us? And þa wurdon hig gedrefede. 4. Ða cwæð se Hælend: Soðlice nys nan witega butan weorþscype, buton on his eðele, and on his mægðe, and on his huse. 5. And he ne mihte þar ænig mægen wyrcan, buton feawa untrume, onasettum his handum, he gehælde. 6. And he wundrode for heora ungeleafan. He þa lærende, þa castel beferde. 7. And him twelfe to geclypode, and agan hig sendan, twam and twam; and him anweald sealde unclænra gasta; 8. and him bebead þæt hig naht on wege ne namon, buton gyrde ane: ne codd, ne hlaf, ne feoh on heora gyrdlum: 9. ac gesceode mid calcum; and þæt hig mid twam tunecum gescrydde næron. 10. And he cwæð to him: Swa hwylc hus swa ge in gað, wuniað þar, oð þæt ge utgan. 11. And swa hwylce swa eow ne gehyrað, þonne ge þanon ut gað, asceacað þæt dust of eowrum fotum, him on gewitnesse.

Among our Tenth century specimens, we must needs have one from the prose dialogues of Solomon and Saturn, our earliest extant example of humouristic writing. It belongs to the latter part of the Tenth century, and is probably to be understood as a parody of the arts of the popular preacher in that revivalist age. The subject is the Pater Noster, which is figuratively anatomized like a human body, and then described in its metaphorical parts with a whimsical stretch of amplification.

. . . . he is reðra and scearpra ðonne eal middangeard, ðeah he sy binnan his feower hwommum fulgedrifen wildeora, and anra gehwylc deor hæbbe synderlice xii hornas irene, and anra gehwylc horn hæbbe xii tindas irene, and anra gehwylc tind hæbbe synderlice xii ordas, and anra gehwylc ord sy xii ðusendum siða scearpra ðonne seo an flan ðe sy fram hundtwelftigum hyrdena geondhyrded . And ðeah ðe seofon middangeardas syn ealle on efn abrædde on ðisses anes onlicnesse, and ðær sy eal gesomnod ðætte heofon oððe hel oððe eorðe æfre acende, ne magon hy ða lifes linan on middan ymb fæðmian. And se Pater Noster he mæg ana ealla gesceafta on his ðære swiðran hand on anes wæxæpples onlicnesse geðyn and gewringan. And his geðoht he is springdra and swiftra ðonne xii ðusendu haligra gasta, ðeah ðe anra gehwylc gast hæbbe synderlice xii feðerhoman, and anra gehwylc feðerhoma hæbbe xii windas, and anra gehwylc wind twelf sigefæstnissa synderlice.—Kemble, pp. 148–152.

. . . . he is fiercer and sharper than all the world, though within its four corners it should be driven full of wild deer, and each particular deer have severally twelve horns of iron, and each particular horn have twelve tines of iron, and each particular tine have severally twelve points, and each particular point be 12,000 times sharper than the arrow-head which had been hardened by 120 hardeners. And though seven worlds should be all fairly spread out after the fashion of this one, and everything should be there assembled that heaven or hell or earth ever engendered, they may not encircle the girth of his body at the middle. And the Pater Noster, he can by himself in his right hand grasp and squeeze all creation like a wax-apple. And his thought it is more alert and swifter than 12,000 angelic spirits, though each particular spirit have severally twelve suits of feathers, and each particular feather-suit have twelve winds, and each particular wind twelve victoriousnesses all to itself.

This is fine prose. It represents, for the time, a high pinnacle of attainment. Adverse times were coming, and this ripe medium of communication presently underwent chequered fortunes; and it was not until the Fifteenth century, when the language had become deflectionized, that there came a second season of equal and even higher maturity. But this Tenth century diction was the voice of the cultured and privileged classes, like the classical Latin, whereas the diction of English

prose at its next culmination will be (like the classic Greek) the voice of the main body of the nation.

The Eleventh Century.

The language of the Eleventh century presents, in its best specimens, little to distinguish it from that of the Tenth, and this is but the natural result of the fact that a standard or norm had now been attained. The prose diction had entered into a condition of stability and permanency. And therefore we shall feel ourselves at liberty to speak of this classic form of our language as 'English Prose of the Tenth century,' though the text spoken of may have been written in the Eleventh, or even, as in some cases, in the Twelfth. We shall indeed see, before the end of the century, some beginnings of that decadence which was to follow, but meanwhile we have a long stretch of unbroken conformity. Our first example shall be taken from the Homilies of Wulfstan, who was Archbishop of York from 1003 to 1023.

Uton beon a urum hlaforde holde and getreowe and æfre eallum mihtum his wurðscipe ræran and his willan wyrcan, forðam eall, þet we æfre for riht hlafordhelde doð, eal we hit doð us sylfum to mycelre þearfe, forðam ðam bið witodlice God hold, þe bið his hlaforde rihtlice hold; and eac ah hlaforda gehwylc þæs for micle þearfe, þæt he his men rihtlice healde. And we biddað and beodað, þæt Godes þeowas, þe for urne cynehlaford and for eal cristen folc þingian scylan and be godra manna ælmessan libbað, þæt hy þæs georne earnian, libban heora lif swa swa bec him wisian, and swa swa heora ealdras hym tæcan, and began heora þeowdom georne, þonne mægon hy ægþer ge hym

Let us be always loyal and true to our lord, and ever by all means maintain his worship and work his will, because all that ever we do out of sincere loyalty, we do it all for our own great advantage, inasmuch as God will assuredly be gracious to the man who is perfectly loyal to his lord; and likewise it is the bounden duty of every lord, that he his men honourably govern. And we entreat and command, that God's ministers, who must intercede for our royal lord, and for all Christian folk, and who live by good men's alms, that they accordingly give diligent attention to live their life as their books guide them, and so as their superiors direct them, and to discharge their

sylfum wel fremian ge eallum cristenum folce.

And we biddað and beodað, þæt ælc cild sy binnan þrittigum nihtum gefullad; gif hit þonne dead weorðe butan fulluhte, and hit on preoste gelang sy, þonne ðolige he his hades and dædbete georne; gif hit þonne þurh mæga gemeleaste gewyrðe, þonne þolige se, ðe hit on gelang sy, ælcere eardwununge and wræcnige of earde oððon on earde swiðe deope gebete, swa biscop him tæce.

Eac we lærað, þæt man ænig ne læte unbiscpod to lange, and witan þa, ðe cildes onfon, þæt heo hit on rihtan geleafan gebringan and on godan þeawan and on þearflican dædan and a forð on hit wisian to ðam þe Gode licige and his sylfes ðearf sy: þonne beoð heo rihtlice ealswa hy genamode beoð, godfæderas, gif hy heora godbearn Gode gestrynað.—Homily xxiv.; ed. Napier.

service heartily; then may they do much good both to themselves and to all Christian people.

And we entreat and command that every child be baptized within thirty days; if, however, it should die without baptism and it be along of the priest, then let him suffer the loss of his order and do careful penance; if, however, it happen through the relatives' neglect, then let him who was in fault suffer the loss of all domiciliary right, and be ejected from his dwelling, or else in his dwelling undergo very severe penance, as the bishop may direct him.

Also we instruct you, that none be left unbishopped too long; and they who are sponsors for a child are to see that they bring it up in right belief, and in good manners and in dutiful conduct, and always continually guide it to that which may be pleasing to God and for his own good; then will they verily be as they are called, 'godfathers,' if they train their god-children for God.

Of all the writers before the Conquest whose names are known to us, Wulfstan is the one whose diction has the most marked physiognomy. There are various pieces of anonymous prose which deserve the attribution of 'Style,' and there are also three writers whose names we know, who can claim the same, namely, Alfred, Ælfric, Wulfstan.

For our next example, we extract from the Chronicle of Worcester the Annal of a memorable year.

1066. On þissum geare com Harold cyng of Eoferwic to

1066. In this year king Harold came from York to West-

Westmynstre. to þam Eastnar þe wæron æfter þam middan wintre þe se cyng forðferde. And wæron þa Eastran on þone dæg .xvi. kl̄ Mai. Þa wearð geond eall Engla land swylc tacen on heofenum gesewen swilce nan man ær ne ge seah. Sume men cwedon. þæt hit cometa se steorra wære. þone sume men hatað þone fæxedon steorran. And he æteowde ærest on þone æfen Letania Maior..viii. kl̄ Mai. and swa scan ealle þa seofon niht.

And sona þer æfter com Tostig eorl in fram begeonde sæ into Wiht. mid swa miclum liðe swa he begitan mihte. and him man geald þær ægþær ge feoh ge metsunge. And Harold cyng his brōþor gegædrade swa micelne scip here. and eac land here. swa nan cyng her on lande ær ne dyde. for þam þe him wæs gecyðd þæt Wyllelm bastard wolde hider and ðis land gewinnan. eall swa hit syððan a eode.

And þa wile com Tostig eorl into Humbran mid sixtigum scipum. and Eadwine eorl com mid landferde and adraf hine ut. And þa butsa carlas hine forsocan. and he for to Scotlande mid .xii. snaccum. And hine gemette þær Harold cyng of Norwegon mid þreom hund scypum. and Tostig him to beah, and his man wearð. And hi foron þa begen into Humbran. oð þæt hi comon to Eoforwic. and heom þær wið fuhton. Eadwine eorl. and

minster, at the Easter-tide after the Christmas in which the king died. And in that year Easter was on April 16. At that time there was seen through all England such a sign in the sky as no man had ever seen before. Some men said that it was the star Cometa, which some men do call the haired star. And it appeared first on the eve of Letania Major, which is April 24, and so shone all that se'nnight.

And soon after that, earl Tostig came in from over sea into Wight, with as great a fleet as he could muster; and there they paid him tribute both in money and provision. Now king Harold his brother was gathering so great a navy and army too, as no king in this country had ever done before; because tidings had been brought to him that William the bastard was meaning to come hither and win this land, as it afterwards came to pass.

Meanwhile earl Tostig came into Humber with 60 ships, and earl Eadwine came with landforce, and drove him out. And the mariners forsook him, and he went to Scotland with 12 smacks. There he was met by Harold king of Norway with 300 ships, and Tostig submitted to him and became his man. And then they went both together into Humber, until they came to York, and there they were attacked by earl Eadwine and

Morkere eorl his broðor. ac þa Normen ahton sige.

Man cyðde þa Harolde Engla cynge þæt þis wæs þus gefaren. And þis gefeoht wæs on Vigilia sċi Mathei. Ða com Harold ure cyng on unwær on þa Normenn. and hytte hi be geondan Eoforwic. æt Stemford brygge. mid micclan here Englisces folces. and þær wearð on dæg swiðe stranglic gefeoht on ba halfe. Þar wearð ofslægen Harold Harfagera [*sic*]. and Tosti eorl. And þa Normen þe þær to lafe wæron wurdon on fleame. and þa Engliscan hi hindan hetelice slogon. oð þæt hig sume to scype coman. sume adruncen. and sume eacf orbærnde. and swa mislice forfarene. þæt þær wæs lyt to lafe. and Engle ahton wælstowe geweald.

Se kyng þa geaf gryð Olafe þæs Norna cynges suna. and heora bisceope. and þan eorle of Orcan ege. and eallon þan þe on þam scypum to lafe wæron. and hi foron þa upp to uran kyninge and sworon aðas. þæt hi æfre woldon fryð and freondscype into þisan lande haldan. and se cyng hi let ham faran mid .xxiii. scypum. Þas twa folcgefeoht wæron gefremmede binnan fif nihtan.

Ða com Wyllelm eorl of Normandige into Pefnes ea on sċe Michaeles mæsse æfen. and sona þæs hi fere wæron, worhton

his brother earl Morkere, but the Northmen were victorious.

Then they brought word to Harold king of the Angles that this had so happened. And this battle was on St. Matthew's eve. Then came Harold our king at unawares upon the Northmen (and he lighted upon them beyond York, at Stamford Bridge), with a great host of English people; and on that day was there a battle, very obstinate on both sides. There was slain Harold Har[drada], and earl Tostig. And the Northmen who remained were dispersed, and the English at their heels smote them fiercely, until that some of them got to ship, some got drowned, and some moreover burnt, and in so many ways destroyed, that little was there remaining, and the English remained masters of the field.

The king then gave a truce to Olaf the son of the Northern king, and to their bishop, and to the earl from Orkney, and to all the survivors in the ships; and they accordingly went ashore to our king and swore oaths, that they would ever hold peace and friendship in relation to this country; and the king let them go home with 23 ships. These two pitched battles were achieved within five days.

Then came count William from Normandy into Pevensey on Michaelmas Eve; and as soon as ever they were ready for

castel æt Hæstinga port. Þis wearð þa Harolde cynge ge cydd. and he gaderade þa mycelne here. and com him to genes æt þære haran apuldran. and Wyllelm him com ongean on unwær ær his folc gefylced wære. Ac se kyng þeah him swiðe heardlice wið feaht mid þam mannum þe him ge læstan woldon. and þær wearð micel wæl geslægen on ægðre healfe. Dær wearð ofslægen Harold kyng. and Leofwine eorl his broðor. and Gyrð eorl his broðor and fela godra manna. and þa Frencyscan ahton wæl stowe geweald. eall swa heom God uðe for folces synnon.

Aldred arcebisceop and seo burh waru on Lundene. woldon habban þa Eadgar cild to kynge, eall swa him wel ge cynde wæs; and Eadwine. and Morkere. him beheton þæt hi mid him feohtan woldon. Ac swa hit æfre forðlicor beon sceolde. swa wearð hit fram dæge to dæge lætre. and wyrre. eall swa hit æt þam ende eall geferde.

Ðis gefeoht wæs ge don on þone dæg Calesti pape. And Wyllelm eorl for eft ongean to Hæstingan. and geanbidode þær hwæðer man him to bugan wolde. Ac þa he ongeat þæt man him to cuman nolde. he for upp mid eallon his here þe him to lafe wæs, and him syððan fram ofer sæ com. and hergade ealne þone ende þe he ofer ferde.

action, they constructed a castle at Hastings town. This was then reported to king Harold, and he at once gathered a great host, and came to meet him at the Hoar Appletree, and William came against him unexpectedly before his force was organized. But the king nevertheless gave him battle very stoutly with those men who would follow him, and there was great slaughter on either side. There was king Harold slain, and earl Leofwine his brother, and earl Gyrth his brother, and many brave men, and the French remained in possession of the field, even as God permitted them for the sins of our people.

Then archbishop Aldred and the burghers in London would have child Eadgar to king, even as indeed his birthright was; and Eadwine and Morkere promised him that they would fight in his cause. But ever as the business ought to be more mature, so grew it from day to day more backward and worse, even as it all proved in the end.

This battle took place on the day of pope Celestius. And count William marched back again to Hastings, and there waited to see whether submission would be made to him. But when he perceived that they would not come to him, he marched inland with all his army that remained alive and some that had since come to him

oð· þæt he com to Beorh ham stede. And þær him com ongean. Ealdred arcebisceop. and Eadgar cild. and Eadwine eorl. and Morkere eorl. and ealle þa betstan men of Lundene. and bugon þa for neode, þa mæst wæs to hearme ge don. (and þæt wæs micel unræd þæt man æror swa ne dyde. þa hit God betan nolde for urum synnum.) and gysledan and sworon him aðas. and he heom behet þæt he wolde heom hold hlaford beon. and þeah onmang þisan hi hergedan eall þæt hi ofor foron.

Ða on midwintres dæg hine halgode to kynge Ealdred arcebisceop on West mynstre. and he sealde him on hand mid Cristes bec. and eac swor. ær þan þe he wolde þa corona him on heafode settan, þæt he wolde þisne þeodscype swa wel haldan. swa ænig kynge æt foran him betst dyde, gif hi him holde beon woldon.

Swa þeah leide gyld on mannum swiðe stið. and for þa on þam lengtene ofer sæ to Normandige. and nam mid him Stigand arcebisceop. and Ægelnað abbot on Glæstinga biri. and Eadgar cild. and Eadwine eorl. and Morkere eorl. and Wælþeof eorl. and manege oðre gode men of Engla lande. And Oda bisceop and Wyllelm eorl belifen

from over the sea, and he harried all the district that he passed over, until he came to Berkhampstead. And there came to meet him archbishop Aldred and child Eadgar, and earl Eadwine and earl Morkere, and all the best men from London; and they submitted then for necessity, when the greatest mischief was done; (and it was very ill-advised that they had not done so earlier, inasmuch as God would not avert it because of our sins); and they gave hostages and swore oaths to him, and he promised them that he would be good lord to them, and nevertheless in the midst of these transactions they harried everything in their march.

Then on Christmas day did archbishop Aldred hallow him to king at Westminster; and he [William] gave him assurance with the Gospe ook, and likewise swore, before that he [Aldred] would set the *corona* on his head, that he would govern this nation as well as any king before him had best done, if they would be loyal to him.

All the same he laid an impost upon people, and a very severe one, and then in the spring he proceeded over sea to Normandy, and took with him archbishop Stigand, and Egelnoth abbot of Glastonbury, and child Eadgar, and earl Eadwine, and earl Morkere, and earl Waltheof, and many other good men out of England. And

her æfter. and worhton castelas wide geond þas þeode. and earm folc swencte. and a syððan hit yflade swiðe. Wurðe god se ende. þonne God wylle.

bishop Odo and earl William remained behind in this country, and they constructed castles all through this nation, and made the poor folk labour at them; and it has been very bad times ever since. May the end be good, when God will.

To such a pitch of maturity had English prose reached before the Norman Conquest; but its growth was naturally checked and thrown back by that event. Henceforward, for a long interval, after the break-up of the native literature, its progress is hard to trace; but still, there is abundant reason to assert that the earlier culture was never obliterated.

Indeed, the Norman Conquest had in the long run a beneficial effect upon English prose. This happened in two ways. First, as it transferred us, gradually and after an interval, from an ancient to a modern pattern, from the model of Latin to that of French, which was soon to figure as the highest example of European prose. But, secondly (and this is a point of the greatest consequence), the depression which it now suffered for three or even we may say four centuries, had the effect of stamping the English language with one of its most peculiar and most valuable characteristics. It was this long obscurity, during which it was excluded from the upper ranks of society, that gave our language that larger measure of popularity, that greater breadth of contact with the nation, than is found in any other of the great literary languages of the West. It is in the English of the Fifteenth century that this character manifests itself in conspicuous maturity, but it still characterizes the English of the Nineteenth; as may be seen in a moment if we compare our language with German or even with French, in respect of its contact with the whole body of the people.

So great was the change of conditions under which the language proceeded to its next great culmination, that the prose of the Tenth century was left as it were stranded in isolated grandeur and distinctness of outline. This is the perfection of our speech as an inflected language. It exhibits

to us our mother tongue with all the advantages that can be obtained by contrast with its present conditions. It is English, invested with the characteristics of an ancient tongue, and a dead language. The general benefits which accrue to mental culture by the study of literature in a dead language, are shared by the student of Tenth century English. And in addition to these, there is the crowning advantage, that this study provides the Englishman with an enriched store of expression to be at his service all the days of his life.

CHAPTER XI

THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PROSE—TO ITS SECOND CULMINATION

English Prose of the Eleventh Century undergoing change—The ancient Grammar beginning to break up—Two streams—A learned language of our own.

English Prose of the Twelfth Century—Eclipse of English literature—Utter disintegration of the old Accidence.

English Prose of the Thirteenth Century—Early specimen of 'impassioned prose'—The rise of French Prose.

English Prose of the Fourteenth Century—English emergent after eclipse—Maundevile—Chaucer—Wiclif—Prognostic of the upheaval coming—Two streams again.

English Prose of the Fifteenth Century—The second Culmination of English Prose—The Paston Letters—Popular favour leaving poetry for prose—Import of Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*—Sir John Fortescue—Comments—History; Caxton—Statutes of the Realm—The Romanic increment in the vocabulary—The breadth of English Prose.

FOR a specimen of the altered Eleventh century prose we will take the following extract from the obituary description of William the Conqueror in the Chronicle of Peterborough, anno 1086:—a favorite passage with the historians and peculiarly interesting as being founded upon personal knowledge.

Gif hwa gewilnigeð to gewitane hu gedon mann he wæs . oððe hwilcne wurðscipe he hæfde . oððe hu fela lande he wære hlaford . ðonne wille we be him awritan swa swa we hine ageaton . ðe him onlocodan . and oðre hwile on his hirede wunedon. Se cyng Willelm ðe we embe specað wæs swiðe wis man . and swithe rice . and wurðfulre and strengere ðonne ænig his

If any one wishes to know what manner of man he was, or what dignity he had, or how many lands he was lord of; then will we write of him as we apprehended him, who were wont to behold him, and at one time were resident at his court. The king William about whom we speak was a very wise man, and very powerful; and more dignified and more authoritative than

foregengra wære . He wæs milde ðam godum mannum ðe God lufedon . and ofer eall gemett stearc ðam mannum ðe wiðcwædon his willan . On ðam ilcan steode ðe God him geuðe ðæt he moste Engleland gegan . he arerde mære mynster . and munecas ðær gesætte . and hit wæll gegodade . On his dagan wæs ðæt mære mynster on Cantwarbyrig getymbrad . and eac swiðe manig oðer ofer eall Englaland . Eac ðis land wæs swiðe afylled mid munecan . and ða leofodan heora lif æfter sċs Benedictus regule . and se Cristendom wæs swilc on his dæge ðæt ælc man hwæt his hade to belumpe . folgade se ðe wolde.

any one of his predecessors was. He was gentle to those good men who loved God ; and terribly stern to those men who contradicted his will. On that selfsame spot where God granted him that he might conquer England, he reared a noble monastery, and monks he there enstalled, and well endowed the place. In his days was the splendid minster in Canterbury built, and also a great many others over all England. Also this land was abundantly supplied with monks ; and they lived their life after St. Benedict's rule ; and the state of Christianity was such in his time, that each man who was so disposed might follow that which appertained to his order.

It is such diction as this that represents the broad tendencies of the language in the Eleventh century, but at the same time it must be remembered that such specimens do not cover the whole field of English prose. If the wide stream is like this, falling more and more into grammatical decay, or in other words, asserting more and more an absolute grammatical freedom ;—there still survives by the side of it a living tradition of classic Englisc, English of the Tenth century, though this ancient stream is now reduced to a narrow rill. Here then for the first time we have to speak of two streams in the history of the English language. There were dialects in the earlier time, but there were never two parallel and rival currents. A similar phenomenon will appear below, and on a grander scale ; but before we come to that, a change will have taken place in the chief representative elements of the competition. Our little rill will by that time have run dry, or nearly so ;—now in the Eleventh century, it is still wide enough to be of importance. In the seats of learning the classic Englisc was cultivated still, and it was to the broad stream of popular

English just what in our own day professors' German is to the rustic and local speech of the Fatherland.

The Twelfth Century.

When we have Mr. Plummer's edition of the Saxon Chronicles, we shall there find as late as the years 1113 and 1114 a specimen of this learned language, of such a quality, as forbids us to think it was (even then) about to fall quickly into desuetude. We must not therefore speak as if Saxonic literature was extinguished by the Norman Conquest; it was indeed eclipsed, it was thrown into obscurity, but it was not by any means immediately extinguished.

We have extensive remains of the period from the Tenth to the Thirteenth century, of which the date cannot be confidently asserted, because of the fixity of the literary diction. Of this kind is the following Perambulation, taken from a manuscript of the latter end of the Twelfth century.

Ðis sindon ða landgemæro to Duclingtune. xiiii. hida and ða ealdan cyricean æt Æstlea and ðærto. xl. æcera and Byrnan lea eal into Duclingtune.

Ærest of Duclingtune on wenric; andlang wenrices on ðone byge; of ðam byge on ða ealdan lace; andlang lace on ða norðea: andlang streames on Folgorhyrste neoðewearde; ðonon on ða ealdan dic; andlang dic ðæt suð eft on wænric; up ongean stream on ðone ealdan ford; of ðone forda up on ða riðe an furlang wið suðan ða cyrican; andlang riðe on ða wurtwalan; ðæt ut ðurh ðone hagan on burhdic ufeuuearde; of ðære dic on ða ealdan rode; of ðære rode on Scottes healh; of ðam heale on Uuenburge byrgge; of ðære bruege on ða dic;

These are the land-boundaries at Ducklington. Fourteen hides and the old churches at Eastlea, and thereto 40 acres, and Byrna's lea, all pertaining to Ducklington.

First, from Ducklington to Windrush; along Windrush to the bend; from the bend to the old lake [running water]; along the lake to the north water; along the stream to the lower end of Folgorhurst; therefrom on to the old dyke; along the dyke in a southerly direction back to Windrush; up against the stream to the old ford; from the ford up on the rivulet a furlong to the south of the Church; along the rivulet on to the root-stubs [i.e. edge of wood], and so out through the enclosed ground [demesne], on to the upper end of the borough-dyke; from the dyke

andlang dices on Easthæma gemære; on ðone bige; to ðan heafdan; on gateðyrnan; of ðære ðyrnan on blace ðyrnan on ða dic; of ðære ðyrnan to uurtwalan to ðan furan; andlang fura on ða ealdan dic to ðan ellene; andlang dices to ðan oðern ellene; of ðan ellene to ðære apoldre; ðanon to Æglesuullan broce; up ongean stream on stanford; of ðan forda on fugel slæd; of ðam slæde on coluullan broc; andlang broces on swyllan healas; of ðan healan on Hastinges lace; andlang lace on ðone ea stream: and twegen hammas æt Loppedeðorne hyrað into Duclingtune.—*A Hand Book to the Land Charters*, by J. Earle (Clarendon Press) 1888; p. 386.

to the old Rood; from the Rood to Scotteshall; from that hall to Wenburgh's bridge; from the bridge to the dyke; along the dyke to the East Ham boundary; on to the bend [in the river ?]; to the headlands; to Goat copse; from that copse to Black copse at the dyke; from that copse to the root-stubs at the trenches; along the trenches on to the old dyke at the elder-tree; along the dyke to the other elder-tree; from that elder to the apple-tree; thence to Aylswell brook; up against stream to stone ford; from the ford to Fowl-slade; from the slade to Colwell brook; along the brook to Swylla's buildings; from those buildings on to Hastings lake [running water]; along that lake to the river-stream. And two hams [enclosed pastures] at Loppedethorn pertain to Ducklington.

But in order to exhibit the average prose of the Twelfth century we will take a brief extract from a long and well known piece which is quoted, more or less at length, by every historian who has treated of the times of Stephen since the days when the Saxon Chronicles became an open book. It is found in the Peterborough Chronicle, under the year 1137.

Wes næure gæt mare wrecchedhed on land . ne næure hethen men werse ne diden þan hi diden. for ouer sithon ne forbaren hi nouther circe ne cyrceiærd . oc namen al þe god ðet þar inne was. and brenden sythen þe cyrce and al te gædere . Ne hi ne for baren b'land ne abb' ne preostes . ac ræueden munekes

Never yet had more wretchedness been in the land, nor did heathen men ever do worse than they did; for often and often they respected neither church nor churchyard, but took all the property that was therein, and then burned the church and all together. Nor did they respect bishop's land, nor abbot's nor

and clerekes . and æuric man other þe ouer myhte . Gif twa men oþer iii. coman ridend to an tun . al þe tunscipe flugæn for heom . wenden ðet hi wæron ræuæres . þe biscopes and lered men heom cursede æure . oc was heom naht þar of . for hi uueron al forcursæd and forsuoren and forloren.

War sæ me tilede . þe erthe ne bar nan corn . for þe land was al for don . mid suilce dædes. and hi sæden openlice ðet XPist slep . and his halechen . Suilc and mare þanne we cunnen sæin . we þolenden xix wintre for ure sinnes.

priest's; but robbed monks and clerks, and every man another who anywhere could. If two or three men came riding to a hamlet, all the township fled before them, imagining them to be robbers. The bishops and clergy constantly cursed them, but nothing came of it; for they were all accursed, and forsworn and desperate.

Wherever a man tilled, the earth bare no corn; for the land was all fordone by such deeds, and they said openly that Christ and his saints slept. Such and more than we can say, we endured nineteen winters for our sins.

The Thirteenth Century.

In the Thirteenth century much of the prose is confused and disguised by a fond lingering sentimentality which led writers to emulate the native literature of the Tenth century either in matter or in diction,—sometimes in both. Some of the writings of the time are accordingly too artificial to be used as samples of the natural progress of English prose, and this limits our field of choice a good deal. But we are happily able to quote a discourse which is exempt from this distorting medium, and which moreover is full of enthusiasm, and of poetic warmth, like the 'impassioned prose' of De Quincey. It is a discourse which was designed to cherish by terms of human passion the cloistered devotion of a nun for her heavenly bridegroom.

Þe Wohunge of ure lauerd.

A ihesu swete ihesu leue þat te luue of þe beo al mi likinge.

Bote nceni man þurh his strengðe and hardischipe ek makes

The Wooing of our Lord.

Ah! Jesu, sweet Jesu, permit that the love of thee may be all my delight.

But many a man through his strength and bravery

him luued and ȝerned . And is ani swa hardi swa artu? Nai . for þu þe ane dreddes nawt wið þin anre deore bodi to fihte aȝaines alle þe ahefulle deueles of helle . þat hwuch of ham swa is lest laðeliche . and grureful . mihte he swuch as he is to monkin him scheawe :[1] al þe world were offeard him ane to bihalde . for ne mihte na mon him seo and in his wit wunie . bute ȝif þe grace and te strengðe of crist baldede his heorte.

Þu art ȝette her wið swa unimete mihti þat wið þi deore-wurðe hond nailet on rode: þu band ta helle dogges . and reftes ham hare praie þat tai hefden grediliche gripen and helden hit faste for adames sunne.

Þu kene kidde kempe robbedes helle hus . lesedes tine prisuns and riddes ham ut of cwalm hus and leddes him wið þe self to þi ȝimmede bur . bold of eche blisse. for þi of þe mi lefmon was soð-liche quiddet . Drihti[n] is mahti strong and kene ifihte . And for þi ȝif me likes stalewurðe lefmon: luue iwile þe ihesu strongest ouer alle . þat þi maht felle mine starke sawle fan . and te strengðe of þe helpe mi muchele wacnesse . and hardischipe of þe balde min herte.

also makes himself beloved and desired. And is any so hardy as thou art? Nay; for thou alone dreadedst not with thine own dear body to fight against all the awful devils of hell; beings that the one of them which is least loathsome and horrible, if he might, such as he is, show himself to mankind, all the world would be distraught only to behold him; for no man might see him and remain in his wits, unless the grace and the strength of Christ emboldened his heart.

Thou art moreover herewith so immensely mighty, that, with thy precious hand nailed on the rood, thou didst bind the hell-dogs and bereftest them of their prey which they had greedily grasped, and held it fast on account of Adam's sin.

Thou keen renowned champion robbedest hell-house, and deliveredest thy prisoners, and diddest rid them out of the house of death, and leddest them with thyself to thy jewelled bower, the abode of eternal bliss; wherefore, of thee, my beloved, was it truly said, 'The Lord is mighty, strong and keen in battle.' And therefore if a stalworth lover delights me, I will love thee, Jesu, strongest over all, so that thy might may fell the strong foes of my soul; and that the strength of thee may help my great weakness, and hardihood from thee may embolden my heart.

[1] This mark of punctuation is usual in manuscripts of the thirteenth century: it is the germ of our semicolon.

A ihesu swete ihesu leue þat te luue of þe beo al mi likinge.—*Old English Homilies*, ed. Morris; Early English Text Society, 1868: p. 271 f.

Ah! Jesu, sweet Jesu, permit that the love of thee may be all my delight.

I will add a short piece taken from the close of this remarkable discourse, to shew how sustained and homogeneous it is, and to exhibit the author speaking in his own proper person.

Þu art best wurð mi luue þat for mi luue deidest . Ȝette ȝif þat i mi luue bede for to selle, and sette feo þer upon swa hehe swa ich eauer wile; ȝette þu wult hit habbe and teken al þat tu haues ȝiuen: wil tu eke mare. and ȝif i þe riht luuie . wilt me crune in heuene wið þe self to rixlen werld in to werlde. A ihesu swete ihesu mi luue . mi lef. mi lif. mi luue leuest þat swa muchel luuedes me þat tu deides for luue of me and fra þe world haues broht me . and ti spuse haues maked me . and all þi blisse haues heht me: leue þat te luue of þe beo al mi likinge.

Thou art most worthy of my love, thou that didst die for the love of me. Yet if I offered my love for sale and set a value thereupon, as high as ever I will, yet thou wilt have it, and moreover to what thou hast given thou wilt add more; and, if I love thee aright, wilt crown me in heaven to reign with thyself, world without end. Ah! Jesu, sweet Jesu, my love, my beloved, my life, my dearest love, that didst love me so much that thou didst die for the love of me, and hast separated me from the world, and hast made me thy spouse, and all thy bliss hast promised me, grant that the love of thee be all my delight.

Prei for me mi leue suster. Þis haue i writen þe for þi þat wordes ofte quemen þe heorte to þenken on ure lauerd . And for þi hwen þu art on eise carpe toward ihesu and seie þise wordes . and þenc as tah he heng biside þe blodi up o rode . And he þurh his grace opne þin heorte to his luue and to reowþe of his pine.—*Id.* p. 285 f.

Pray for me, my dear sister. This have I written thee because that words often persuade the heart to think on our Lord. And therefore, when thou art in ease, speak to Jesu and say these words; and think as though he hung beside thee bloody on the rood; and may he, through his grace, open thine heart to the love of him, and to ruth of his pain.

We may now consider that we have reached the most obscure moment of English prose—the time when its only field of

exercise was in the region of domestic and religious interests. In the next century we begin to see it emerging from this depression. At this juncture we may find it convenient to take notice of a landmark or two.

1. As we proceed in the more modern diction we shall see a tendency in the Passive to gain ground at the expense of the Active Voice, and this will account for our use of a Passive structure in many places where modern German uses an Active one. Such changes are often incomplete; something survives from the earlier fashion; such a survival is the frequent phrase: 'The reason of that is not far to seek.'

2. In this great Transition period we lost our Impersonal Pronoun *man*, to our great inconvenience, and to the increment of the Passive Voice. Being rapidly and lightly pronounced, as was natural to a symbolic word of such high abstraction, it fell into a modified orthography, being first written *men*, and then *me*. When it had come to this shape, perhaps its identity of form with *me* of the First Personal Pronoun may have made its retention inconvenient. Of this reduced form we see an example above in the Annal for 1137, and close by that example we see 'they said' expressed by 'hi sæden'—practical evidence that the old impersonal pronoun was effete. Yet this pronominal *man*, which disappeared thus early from our literary diction, has survived in Devon to our day, and I have often heard *zo min zay* so they say, in the impersonal sense which we now express by the formula 'so it is said.' Of all the ways in which this sore loss is supplemented, the most singular and idiomatic and insular is the use of the Second Personal Pronoun *you* in the function impersonal. It has become familiar to us—I may say, strangely familiar, considering how exposed it is to inconvenient misunderstandings, especially in conversation.

3. We now approach the time when we must become cognizant of the most pervading of all the innovations caused by the Denish settlements in the northern and eastern regions of this island. The plurals of the Third Person, which hitherto had been *hi, heora, heom*, now became gradually changed to *they, their, them*, and this change gravitated slowly from north to south, invading first our poetry and then our prose.

Chaucer had only accepted one of the new pronouns, namely, the nominative *they*;—but by the fifteenth century *they, their, them* was universally established in English literature. The popular speech however, with its *'em* (not for *them*, but for *heom, hem*) is still faithful to the ancestral grammar.

4. An important innovation was the use of *which* as a Relative Pronoun. In Saxon times *hwilc* had only two functions, namely, the Interrogative, as when we say *Which shall I take?* and the Indefinite, as in the compound *whichever*. Romanesque influence caused us to employ it further as a Relative Pronoun, especially with the antecedent *such*. It is seen in the opening of Chaucer's *Prologue*.

swiche . . . whiche.

Whanne that April with his shoures sote
The drought of March hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veine in swiche licour,
Of whiche vertue engendred is the flour; . . .

This century saw the beginning of French prose literature, in the history which Geoffroy de Villehardouin wrote of the siege of Constantinople, which he witnessed, in 1204.

The Fourteenth Century.

For the Fourteenth Century we will first quote *The Voiage and Travaile* of Sir John Maundevile (1322–1388) in whose smooth running lines the beneficial effect of French culture may be recognized.

And ȝee schulle undirstonde, that no man that is mortelle, ne may not approchen to that Paradys. For be Londe no man may go for wylde bestes, that ben in the Desertes, and for the highe Mountaynes and gret huge Roches, that no man may passe by, for the derke places that ben there, and that manye: And be the Ryveres may no man go; for the water rennethe so rudely and so scharply, because that it comethe doun so outrageously from the highe places aboven, that it rennethe in so grete Wawes, that no Schipp may not rowe ne seyle aȝenes it: and the Watre rorethe so, and makethe so huge noyse, and so gret tempest, that no man may here other in the Schipp, thoughe he cryede with alle the craft that he cowde, in the hyeste voys that he myghte. Many grete Lordes han assayéd with grete wille many tymes for to passen be the Ryveres toward

Paradys, with fulle grete Companyes: but thei myghte not speden in hire Viage; and manye dyeden for werynesse of rowynge aȝenst the stronge Wawes; and many of hem becamen blynde, and manye deve, for the noyse of the Water; and sume weren perrisscht and loste, with inne the Wawes: So that no mortelle man may approche to that place, with outen specyalle grace of God: so that of that place I can seye ȝou no more. And therefore I schalle holde me stille, and retornen to that that I have seen.

Here follows a quotation from Chaucer's *Treatise of the Astrolabe*, which is assigned by the editor (Professor Skeat) to the year 1391.

Litell Lowys my sone, I haue perceiued well by certeyne euidences thine abilite to lerne sciencez touchinge noumbres & proporciouns: & as wel considere I thy bisi preyere in special to lerne the tretis of the astrelabie. . . . . Now wol I prey mekly euery discret persone that redith or herith this litel tretis, to haue my rewde endytyng for excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The firste cause is, for that curious enditing and hard sentence is ful heuy atones for swich a child to lerne. And the seconde cause is this, that sothly me semeth betre to writen onto a child twies a good sentence, than he forget it ones. And Lowis, yif so be that I shewe the in my lihte Englissh as trewe conclusiouns touching this matere, and nawht only as trewe but as many and as subtil conclusions as ben shewed in Latyn in ani commune tretis of the astrelabie, kon me the more thank; and preye God saue the kyng that is lord of this langage, and alle that him feyth berith and obeieth, euerech in his degree, the more and the lasse. But considere wel, that I ne vsurpe nat to haue fownde this werk of my labour or of myn engin. I nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens, and haue hit translated in myn englissh only for thi doctrine; and with this swerd shal I slen envie.

This is beautiful writing, and it springs out of the habit of the native prose as improved by French culture. But when Chaucer has to do with texts in scholastic Latin, he catches their manner, and becomes monotonous and tedious. In illustration of this I will take an extract from *The Persones Tale*.

Remedium Superbiae.

Now sith that so is, that ye have understond what is pride, and which be the spices of it, and how mennes pride sourdeth and springeth;

now ye shul understond which is the remedie ayenst it. Humilitee or mekenesse is the remedie ayenst pride; that is a vertue, thurgh which a man hath veray knowledge of himself, and holdeth of himself no deintee, ne no pris, as in regard of his desertes, considering ever his freeltee. Now ben ther three maner of humilitees; an humilitee in herte, and another in the mouth, and the thridde in werkes. The humilitee in herte is in foure maners: that on is, whan a man holdeth himself as nought worth before God of heven: the second is, whan he despiseth non other man: the thridde is, whan he ne recketh nat though men holde him nought worth: and the fourth is, whan he is not sory of his humiliation. Also the humilitee of mouth is in foure thinges; in attemperat speche; in humilitee of speche; and whan he confesseth with his owen mouth, that he is swiche as he thinketh that he is in his herte: another is, whan he preiseth the bountee of another man and nothing therof amenuseth. Humilitee eke in werkes is in foure maners. The first is, whan he putteth other men before him; the second is, to chese the lowest place of all; the thridde is, gladly to assent to good conseil; the fourth is, to stond gladly to the award of his soveraine, or of him that is higher in degree: certain this is a gret werk of humilitee.

When historical students working in special epochs of our history have come across admirable composition in English prose, they have almost uniformly treated it as a prodigy in nature, something quite contrary to all analogy and reasonable expectation, as if it were possible for any prose to appear in any language but as the natural outcome of growth and antecedent culture. In regard to the literature of the fourteenth century, no greater gain has been made in living memory than that which is associated with the work of Dr. Shirley, who was Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford. His Wiclif studies, which opened a new era to the eyes of his countrymen, led him to admire the beauty of Wiclif's English prose. But this admiration, when he comes to describe it, takes rather the form of wonder at the strangeness of the phenomenon, as if in a language unprepared by antecedent culture to support the effort. These are Dr. Shirley's words:

It is not by his translation of the Bible, remarkable as that work is, that Wiclif can be judged as a writer. It is in his original tracts that the exquisite pathos, the keen delicate irony, the manly passion

of his short nervous sentences, fairly overmasters the weakness of the unformed language, and gives us English which cannot be read without a feeling of its beauty to this hour.—*Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. xlvi.

Living men can remember, when to have talked of the beauty of our Fourteenth century poetry would only have provoked a gentle and compassionate smile in well-mannered and reputedly well-instructed circles; but now in the same regions of society the fact is so well established that any such utterance could run no worse risk than that of falling flat as a pedantic truism. But to see any beauty in the prose of the same age may perhaps in some cases still require the cultivation of a new faculty. I am glad therefore in this respect to be able to use the language of one who cannot be suspected of undue partiality to his mother tongue.

I will here quote a specimen from one of Wiclif's controversial tracts.

Aftir þat Crist was stied in to hevene, aboute ten daies, as he hadde ordeynid, he sente doun þe Holi Goost, and movede apostlis to do his dedes; and þei wenten and prechiden faste among Jewis and heþen men. But Jewis aȝenstonden hem faste, and heþene men token him wiþ wille, and resceyveden þe Holy Goost, and bicamen Cristene men. And þus apostlis of Crist filliden bi Goddis grace þis world. But longe aftir, as croniclis seien, þe fend hadde envie herto; and bi Silvestre preest of Rome he brouȝte in a newe gile, and moved þe emperour of Rome to dowe þis Chirche in þis preest. For, as the fend tauȝte þis kyng, þis dede cam of greet almes; for þei þouȝten not how þe Chirche shulde sue Crist in his lawe. But trewe men supposen here, þat boþe þis emperour and þis preest weren moved of God bi tymes to trowe þat þei synneden in þis dede. But bisie we us not where þei ben seintis, and how þei were þus moved of God; for al þis is bynebe bileve, and men mai trowe it ȝif þei wolen.

Whan þis lif was þus changid, þe name of this preest was changid; he was not clepid Cristis apostle, ne hiȝ disciple of Crist, but he was clepid the pope, and heed of al hooli Chirche; and aftirward camen oþer names bi feynyng of ypocritis; as sum men seien, þat he is even wiþ the manheed of Crist, and hierste viker of Crist to do in erþe whatever him likiþ; and summe florishen oþir names, and seien þat he is moost blissed fadir. But cause hereof

ben beneficis þat þis preest ȝyveþ to men; for Symon Magus travailide nevere more in symonie þan þes preestis doon. And so God wolde suffre no lenger þe fend to regne oonli in oo siche preest, but, for synne þat þei hadden do, made devisioun amongis two, so þat men myȝten liȝtlier in Cristis name overcome þes boþe. For as o virtu is strengere if it be gedrid, þan if it be scatrid, so o malis is strenger whanne it is gederid in o persone, and it is of lesse strengþe whanne it is departid in manye; for þanne oon helpiþ aȝen anoþir to confounde Anticrist.

And þis moveþ pore preestis to speke now herteli in þis mater. For whanne þat God wole helpe his Chirche, and men ben slowe and wole not worche, þis sloupe is to be dampned for many causis in idil men. And myche more ben þei dampnable, þat letten Goddis lawe to shyne.—*Select English Works of John Wiclif*, ed. T. Arnold, vol. iii. p. 340.

The following is from one of the Wicliffite Tracts, though the style is not, in the opinion of Mr. T. Arnold, that of Wiclif himself, but more like that of 'some fiery follower of his.'

Also þei chalengen fraunchise and privylegie in many grete chirchis, þat wickid men, opyn þeves, mansleeris, þat han borwed here neiȝeboris goodis and ben in power to paie and make restitucion, þere schullen dwelle in seyntewarie, and no man empeche hem bi processe of lawe, ne oop sworn on Goddis body and used. And þei meyntenen stifly þat þe kyng mote conferme þis privylegie and neste of þeves and robberie of þis rewme, aȝenst Goddis hestes, riȝtwisnesse and his opyn oop, bi which he is sworn to do justice and equite to alle his lege men. And for þis privylegie, þat is opyn heresie, þes proude worldly clerkis wolen coste and fiȝtte to meyntene it forþ, for wynnyng of worldly dritt; but for to meyntene privylegie of Cristis gospel, or Cristis mekenesse and povert, wolen þei not coste a ferþing, but spend many þousand pound to make it heresie, and curse prisone and brenne alle men þat techen trewly þe gospel, and þe pore lif of Crist and his postlis. Certis it were grete synne to sclaundre þe Quene of Englond, or Empresse, wiþ synne of avowtrie, where siche were ful trewe and clene and chast to here laweful husbonde; it is a þousand fold more synne to sclaundre holy Chirche, Cristis spouse, whiche Chirche, as Seynt Poul seiþ, is a pilere and foundement of trewþe, wiþ here cursed ypocrisie and robbyng of Cristen mennis goodis bi long custom of wrong and synne. Certis alle Cristen men schulden crie out on þes cursed heretikis, þat sclaundren Crist and holy Chirche his trewe spouse.

For in þis þei maken holy Chirche a bande of here synne, and resceitour of here ravyn, and sclaundren holy Chirche wiþ þe cursede dedis of Anticristis chirche and synagoge of Sathanas. And þus þei seyn good evyl and evyl good, for to have Goddis curs. —*Id.* vol. iii. p. 294.

On the whole the Fourteenth century was a century not of prose but of poetry; and yet, by the side of its noble poetry we see intimations of that approaching elevation of prose which was to culminate in the next century. In addition to the examples which have been quoted, we should note that in this century English begins again to be exercised in the diction of history, by Trevisa's translation of Higden's Polycronicon, which was written in Latin. I do not give a specimen of this important translation here, because it has already been quoted above in the Chapter on Idiom.

The Fifteenth Century.

In passing on to the Fifteenth century we pass into a great era of prose. Vast quantities of verse were indeed produced in this century, but nobody reads it; there is hardly anything worthy of the name of poetry; it is but prose in disguise. On the other hand the Prose is mature and excellent, and the faculty of prose-writing is widely diffused. The Paston Letters alone, if nothing else had been preserved from this century, would be enough to satisfy us of this. In these letters, which form an almost continuous series stretching through three generations, we see persons, of every condition above the lowest grade, able to express themselves well in matters of business or politics or gossip, and, in short, able to write good English prose. Moreover, we have English treatises of some compass, as in the books of Sir John Fortescue and Reginald Pecock.

But what more especially marks this age in our history is the transfer of entertaining literature from Poetry to Prose. We may notice some beginnings of this change in the previous century. But whatever Chaucer's Prose Tales were intended to be, we cannot call them entertaining, or think that they did much to advance prose as a vehicle of popular literature.

But now in the Fifteenth century the change is manifest. The chief monument of this change is the important work of Sir Thomas Malory, who brought the Arthurian cycle of legends out of the degenerate poetry in which they were then current, and gave them a new life in English Prose. This is a moment of great importance for our history, as it is the first start of that career in the field of entertaining literature wherein English Prose was to be eminently successful.

The Fifteenth century holds an elevated position in the history of English prose. Looking back we see that this is the second time the language has approached what may be described as a summit, a stage of perfection. And as in the Tenth century that attainment was blighted and merged in obscurity by a great revolution, so with the prose of the Fifteenth century it happened that it was closely followed by a great revolution (of a very different kind indeed) which tended to eclipse it. The revolution in this case was that which we call The Revival of Letters. By setting up new standards, this event caused a prodigious expansion of the imitative kind, and so introduced into English prose the strange and often unnatural formulæ of classical diction. But while a new taste arose and distracted the attention of the modish from that which was simple and natural, the true English tradition was by no means extinguished. It was thrown into the shade indeed, but perhaps the ultimate result was all the better. Much of that which is most highly valued and in the most permanent honour in the prose of the sixteenth century is the continuation of the true tradition which is properly rooted in the fifteenth. The great proof of this is the Bible translations from the hands of Tyndale and Coverdale. This is recognized as the great work of the sixteenth century, and the praise which is by common consent accorded to the diction of the English Bible is really praise of those translators, and it is a national recognition of the English prose of the Fifteenth century.

The following letter is from Henry Prince of Wales (afterwards Henry V.) to his father, and it is one of the earliest of extant letters written in English, simply because the Norman Conquest had brought in two other languages, the Latin and the French, and had given them precedence over the English.

Henry Prince of Wales to his father Henry IV. A.D. 1402.

My soverain lord and fader, I Recomande me to yowr good and gracieux lordship, as humbly as I can, desiring to heere as good tydingges of yow and yowr hye estat, as ever did liege man of his soverain lord. And, Sir, I trust to God that ye shal have now a companie comyng with my brother of Bedford that ye shal like wel in good feith as hit is do me wite. Neverthelatter my brothers mainy [*company*] have I seyn, which is right a tal meyny. And so schal ye se of thaym that be of yowr other Captaines leding, of which I sende yow al the names in a rolle, be [*by*] the berer of this. Also so, Sir, blessid be God of the good and gracieux tydingges that ye have liked to send me word of be [*by*] Herford your messager, which were the gladdist that ever I myȝt here, next yowr wel fare, be my trouth: . . . . . Also Sir, blessid be God, yowr gret ship the *Grace Dieu* is even as redy, and is the fairest that ever man saugh, I trowe in good feith; and this same day th' Erle of Devenshir my cosin maad his moustre [*muster*] in her, and al others have her [*their*] moustre the same tyme that shal go to þe see. And Sir I trowe ye have on [*one*] comyng toward yow as glad as any man can be, as far as he shewith, that is the King of Scotts: for he thanketh God that he shal mowe shewe be experience thentente of his goodwill be the suffrance of your good lordship. My soverain lord, more can I not write to yowr hynesse at this time; but þt ever I beseche yow of your good and gracieux lordship as, be my trouth, my witting willingly I shal never deserve the contrary, that woot God, to whom I pray to send yow al þt yowr hert desireth to his plaisance. Writen in yowr town of Hampton, the xiiijth day of May.—Yowr trewe and humble liege man and sone, H.G.

It is interesting to see in what manner the subject of translation from Latin into English is discussed.

1450.

Yt is not lyght for euery man to drawe eny longe thyng from Latyn into oure Englyshe tongue. For there ys many wordes in Latin that we haue no propre Englysh accordynge therto. And then suche wordes muste be turnyd as the sentence may beste be vnderstondyd. And therfore though I laboure to kepe bothe the wordes and the sentence in this boke as farre as oure language wyll well assente: yet some tyme I folowe the sentence and not the wordes, as the mater asketh. There is also many wordes that have dyverse vnderstondynges, and some tyme they are taken in one wyse, some tyme in an other, and som tyme they may be taken in

dyuerse wyse, in one reson or clause. Dyuerse wordes also in dyuerse scryptures ar set and vnderstonde some tyme other wyse than auctoures of gramer tell or speke of. Oure language is also so dyuerse in yt selfe, that the commen maner of spekying in Englysshe of some contre can skante be vnderstonded in some other contre of the same londe. And for these causes and suche other, yf any persones there be that holde them selfe connyng as some do, that whan they can onely a lytell gramer, or a lytel latyn and scarcely that wel; they ar more bolde to catche at a mannes saynge, or at hys wrytynge, then wolde many wyse clerkes that be. Therfore yf eny suche parsone happen to se this boke or any other of oure drawyng and fynde eny thynge therein not drawen to hys entente, and therfore is redy to blame yt, and to say yt is wronge; I counsell you that in symplenes seke your soulles fode; and to take lytell hede at hys saynges, wyttynge well that the wyser that eny man ys, the better wyll he be aduysed, or he blame an other mannes studdy. And the lesse good that he can, the more presumptuous wyll he be to fynde defaulte and to depraue, ye often tymes tho thynges that he vnderstondyth not. And therfore they that holde them selfe so wyse, may be contente wyth theyr owne wysdome, for I began thys werke nothynge for them, but for the edyfycacyon of you that fele symplely in your owne wyttes, and loue to be enformyd. I am not wyser than was seint Hierome that in the drawyng of holy scripture from other langage in to latyn, sayth how he was compellyd at eche boke to answere to the bakbytinge of them that depraued hys laboure. But for that I know myne owne feobleness, as well in connyng as in verteu; therefore I will neyther seke defaulte in other, ne maynteyne myne owne; but lowely I submyt me and all oure wrytynges, and other werkes to the correccyon of oure mother holy chyrche, and of the prelates and fathers thereof, and of all that are wyser and can fele better. Besechynge you all way mooste dere and deuoute systres to praye that bothe thys, and all other dedes be euer rewlyd to oure lordes worshyp. Amen.—*The Myroure of oure Ladye*, ed. J. H. Blunt, p. 7. Early English Text Society, Extra Series, xix.

The Paston Letters.

1454, 11 July.

Edmond Lord Grey of Hastings to John Paston.

To my trusty and wele belovid John Paston, Squyer, be this lettre delivered.

Trusty and welebelovid frend, I comaund me to 3ow, certifying

3ow that and 3our sustyr be not 3it maried, y trust to God y know that where she may be maried to a gentylman of iii. C. [300] marc of lyvelod, the which is a grete gentylman born, and of gode blode; and yf 3e think that y shall labore ony ferder therynne, y pray 3ow send me word by the bringer of this lettre, for y have spoke with the parties, and they have granted me that they wolle procede no ferder therynne tyll y speke with hem a3en; and therefore, y pray 3ow, send me word in hast how that 3e wylle be desposed therynne; and God have 3ow in hys kepyng. W[r]ettin at Ampthill, the xj. day of July last past. By Edmond Grey, Lord of Hastynges, Waiford and Ruthyn.

July 15.

John Paston to Lord Grey.

Dominus de Grey.

Right worshipfull and ryght gode Lord, I recomand me to yowr gode Lordship. And where as it pleasyd yowr Lordship to dyrecte yowr letter to me for a maryage for my por suster to a jantylman of yowr knowleth of CCC. marc lyflod, in cas she wer not maryd; wherfor I am bownd to do your Lordship servyse; forsothe, my Lord, she is not maryd, ne insurid to noman; ther is and hath be, dyvers tymys and late, comunycacion of seche maryages with dyvers jantylmen not determynyd as yett, and whedder the jantylman that yowr Lordchip menith of be on of hem or nay I dowth. And wher as your seyd letter specyfyith that I shall send yow word whedder I thowght ye shuld labour ferther in the matter or nay, in that, my lord, I dare not preswme to wryte so to yow wythowte I knew the gentylmans name,—notwythstandyng, my Lord, I shall take uppe on me, wyth the avyse of other of here frendys, that she shall nother be maryd ner inswryd to no creatwr, ne forther prosede in no seche mater befor the fest of the Assumpcion of owr Lady next comyng, dwryng whyche tyme yowr Lordship may send me, if itt please yow, certeyn informacion of the seyd gentylmanys name, and of the place and contrey where hys lyfflod lyth, and whedder he hath any chylder, and, after, I shall demene me in the mater as yowr Lordship shall be pleasyd; for in gode feyth, my Lord, it were to me grette joy that my seyd pore suster were, according to hier pore degre, marijd be yowr avyse, trustyng thanne that ye wold be here gode Lord.

Ryght wurchipfull and my ryght gode Lord, I beseche Almyghty God to have yow in His kepyng. Wrete att Norwych, the xv. day of Jull.

Sir Thomas Malory. About 1460.

And when Sir Ector heard such noise and light in the quire of Joyous Gard, he alight and put his horse from him, and came into the quire, and there he saw men sing and weep. And all they knew Sir Ector, but he knew not them. Then went Sir Bors unto Sir Ector, and told him how there lay his brother Sir Launcelot dead. And then Sir Ector threw his shield, sword, and helm from him; and when he beheld Sir Launcelot's visage he fell down in a swoon. And when he awaked it were hard any tongue to tell the doleful complaints that he made for his brother. Ah, Launcelot, he said, thou were head of all christian knights; and now I dare say, said Sir Ector, thou Sir Launcelot, there thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's hand; and thou were the courtiest knight that ever bare shield; and thou were the truest friend to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou were the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman; and thou were the kindest man that ever strake with sword; and thou were the goodliest person ever came among press of knights; and thou was the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies; and thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest.—*Morte Darthur.*

Sir John Fortescue. 1471–6.

And sithyn it is necessarie that the Kynge be always riche, wich may not be withowt he haue revenues sufficiant for the yerely mayntenance of his estate; it is behouefull that we furst esteme, what his erly charges and expenses bith likely to drawe vnto. Ffor aftir that nedith his reuenues to be proporcioned; but yet thai nedun to be gretter than woll be the charges, for doute of soden cases, wich mey falle to hym and to his reaume. Ffor Seynt Bernarde saith, that yf a mannes expenses be eqall to his livelode, a soden chaunce mey distroye his estate. The kynges yerely expenses stonden in charges ordinarie, and in charges extra ordinarie. His charges ordinary mey not be eschewed, and therefore it nedith that ther be lyvelode asseigned ffor the payment thereof; wich lyvelode be in no wyse putte to no other vse. And yff it happen that any patent be made of any parte thereof to other vse, that thanne that patent be voide and of non effect. Wich thynge yff hit be ffermely estableshed, the kynges ordinarie charges mey alway be paid in hande, and the provision ffor hem mey alway be made in seson, wich shalbe worth to the kynge the iiiith or the vth parte of the quantite of his expenses for ordinarie charges. This may in nothinge restrane the

kyngis pover. Ffor it is no poiar to mowe aliene and put away; but it is power to mowe haue and kepe to hym self. As it is no poiar to mowe synne, and to do ylle, or to mowe to be seke, wex olde, or that a man may hurt hym self. Ffor all this poiars comen of impotencie. And therfore thay may properly by callid nown poiars. Wherfore the holy sprites and angels, that may not synne, wex old, be seke, or hurte ham selff, haue more poiar than we, that mey harme owre selff with all thes defautes.

So is the kynges power more, in that he may not put ffrom hym possescions necessaries for his owne sustenance, than yff he myght put ham ffrom hym, and aliene the same to his owne hurte and harme. Nor is this ayen the kynges prerogatiff, be wich he is exaltid above his subgettes; but rather this is to hym a prerogatiff. Ffor no man saue he mey haue ayen the lande that he hath onis aliened. This livelode asseigned ffor the ordinarie charges shall aftirwarde be neuer asked off the kynge, nor his highness shall thynke ffor that, that he hath the more livelode to be given awey; but be reason hereoff he will the more restrayn his yeftis off other off his livelod, considerynge that than it woll not be grette, and therfore he shall haue more nede off it then thai that will aske it. The ordenarie charges, wich the writer hereoff can nowe remenbr, be thies; the kynges housholde, his warderobe. And how so be it that the kynge liste now, or will hereafter, make his howshold lesse than it was wonned to be; yet his highnes shall than haue therfore a bouute his persone, ffor his honour and suyrte, lordes, knyghtes, and sqviers, and other, in al so grete nombr, or gretter than his howsolde was wonned to be, to his charges peraduentur also gretly, as his houshold well ruled was wonned to stonde hym inne. Wherfor hereinne it nedith not to considre or to purvey, but only ffor the kynges house, wich he may resume or chaunge in to his new maner, or other fourme at his pleasur, and as it shalbe thought aftir the seasons most expedient. The expenses off wich housholde mey sone be estemed by the wich off olde tyme haue be officers therein, and bi the clerkys off theschequer. The secounde ordinarie charge is the payment off the wages and ffees off the kynges grete officers, his courtes, and his counsell. Wich charge woll alwey be grete, and thies men nedun to be alway redely payid. Ffor indigens in ham is not only vnworshipfull, but it mey do the most harme that mey falle of eny nede in any estate of the lande, aftir the kynges most grete estate. The thirde charge ordinarie is the payment of the kepyng of the marches, wher in we beyre moch gretter charges yerely than done the Scottis, wich often tymes is

for the ffauour that we do to the persones that kepe ham, wich ffauoure the Scottis do not. The iiiith charge is the kepyng off Caleis, wich charge is welynoghe knowen. The vth charge is ffor the kynges werkes, off wich the yerely expenses may not be estemede, but yet the accoumptes off the clerkes off the werkes wollyn shewe the likeness theroff, wile the kynge makith no new werkes. The kepynge off the see I reken not amonge the ordinarie charges, how be it the charge theroff is yerely borne, bi cause it is not estimable, and the kynge hath therfore the subsidie off pondage and tonnage. Nor the lesse be that reason pondage and tonnage mey not be rekenned as parcell off the revenues wich the kynge hath ffor the mayntenance off his estate, bi cause it aught to be applied only to the kepynge off the see. And though we haue not alwey werre vppon the see, yet it shalbe necessarie that the kynge haue alway some ffloute apon the see, ffor the repressynge off rovers, sauynge off owre marchauntes, owre ffishers, and the dwellers vppon owre costes; and that the kynge kepe alway some grete and myghty vessels, ffor the brekynge off an armye when any shall be made ayen hym apon the see. Ffor thanne it shall be to late to do make such vessailles. And yet with owt thaym all the kynges navey shall not suffice to borde with carrikkes and other grete vessailes, nor yet to mowe breke a myghty ffloute gadered off purpose. Now, as I suppose, we haue rekened the grettest parte off the kynges ordinarie charges. Wherefore we woll considre next his extra ordinarie charges, also ferre as mey be possible to vs.—*The Governance of England*, Chapter vi. pp. 120–123, ed. Plummer, Clarendon Press, 1885.

I need hardly say that in order to judge of this prose it is necessary to be able to read it with understanding. It is marvellous how easily and readily, considering the distance of time, it is intelligible to the modern reader; but still the changes of usage are so thick in it as to require close attention if it is to be redd with due appreciation. The facility with which it yields some inkling of its sense should not be suffered to delude the wary student.

Here it may be convenient to offer a few comments, which I do the more willingly as this will serve, not merely for the elucidation of these extracts, but also for notes of the progress of English prose at this stage of its history.

1. The rule is not yet known, that two negatives are equal to one affirmative. For example: 'wich lyvelode be in no

wyse putte to no other vse.' But we are already in the beginning of that classical revival, which was to pave the way for this dogma.

2. Of the New Personal Pronouns *they, their, them,* we see the nominative *they* is fully established, but in the objective case the usage is still unsettled. Once we have 'thaym,' but oftener that elder form '*hem, ham,*' which still survives in rustic speech.

3. In the English of this time there is many a touch of French usage which had fastened upon English and which has since been rubbed off; one such we see in the pluralizing of the adjective, 'possescions necessaries.'

4. Some word-coalitions which had grown in a time of literary obscurity have since been disintegrated, as 'the-schequer,' 'welynoghe,' 'shalbe.'

5. The reverse also occurs—'how be it,' 'bi cause,' 'with owt,' 'hym self,' 'owre selff.'

Here follows a letter which was addressed to the burghers of Ipswich in the year 1497, by the Earl of Oxford in his capacity as Lord Warden of Suffolk, to require them to raise men for the king's war against the Scottish king. This letter is happily extant in the Town Book of Ipswich, and it was printed a few years ago in the 'Suffolk Notes and Queries.'

Right welbeloved, I recomaund me unto you And for asmoche as the Kyng our soveraign lord, with the aide and assistence of his true loving subgettes this next somer in his owne persone, for the repressing the presumpsion and malys of the Kyng of Scotts, entendith to make an army and viage roiall both by see and by londe towards the partees of Scotlond, and for thaccomplisshment of the same hath yoven me in comaundment in myn owne persone with a certayn nowmbre by his grace appoynted at his wages to geve hym attendance and to accomplissh my said nowmbre of thenhabitants of the counties wherof his highness before tyme hath yoven me the Rule and governaunce aswele of knyghtes esquiers and gentilmen as other able yomenne withine the same; I therfor have appoynted you to sende to me for your towneship xx. able men aswele archiers as billes defensibly in fourme of warre adressed to do the Kyng servyce in my company and retynew ffor the which I right hartly pray you and in the Kyng our soveraign lordes behalve straitly charge you in godely hast upon the sight of this my writyng to

adresse and prepare them in a redynes of warre so as they be fully appointed before the feest of Midsomer next ensuyng. And therupon to be forthcomyng and to me do resorte at such tyme and place as you fro me shal have ferther knowlege. And god kepe you. Wretyn at my castell of Hedingham the xxvij day of Marche.—Oxynford.

To my right wellbeloved the bailifs and Inhabitants of the Towne of Gyppeswiche.

In this century moreover the function of original history was at length restored to the English language, after a suspension of four hundred years. The latest of the Saxon Chronicles closes with 1154, and from that date our native annals are written in Latin or in French. Now we enter upon a new era, which is marked by annals translated into English, and also by original historical writings in English. We have seen in the last century that history was rendered into English from the learned Latin, and now we find the popular French also giving place by translation to the native English. There was a general history of Britain known as *The Brute*, written in French; this was now translated into English.[1] Through Mr. Maunde Thompson's edition of Baker's Chronicle I am enabled to quote this English history, which is extant only in manuscript. The piece I am about to quote has a feature which may serve to mark the progress of English diction, as it contains an early example of an Article before a river-name, indeed the earliest that I have yet noticed. To offer it strictly as a note of the time would indeed be premature, for it does not so much indicate an English fashion, as the fact that the translator was working from a French original. But still we see that cause at work which ultimately had the effect of establishing this usage.

And in þat same tyme þe same bisshop had in Londone a fair toure in making in his cloos uppon þe river of þe Thamyse, þat was withoute Temple barre; and him failed stone for to make þerof an ende.—Quoted in *Chronicon Galfridi Le Baker*, ed. E. Maunde Thompson, p. 198.

[1] A history of Britain was popularly called *Brut* later *Brute*, from a semi-learned superstition that the founder and eponymous hero of Britain had been Brutus.

Before the end of the century we had a History of England circulating in print, namely William Caxton's *Chronicles of England*, 1480.

And to complete the sketch of this great prose era, it was in the Fifteenth century that the Statutes were again published in English, after five centuries' suspension of the native language as the voice of law. The Norman Conquest brought Latin and French into the functions of administration and legislation; the Latin, which was at first prevalent, being gradually superseded by French, and then the French in its turn being superseded by the English. The first turning-point was in the reign of Edward I., the second in the thirty-sixth year of Edward III. The Statutes of Edward I. are in Latin and French indiscriminately, but still with some preponderance of Latin. In the next reign the proportion is reversed, and this change in favour of French is progressive, until we come to the end of the fourteenth century, where we find Latin wholly disused. The earliest recorded use of English in legislative action is in 36 Edward III., when it is expressly stated that the causes for summoning the Parliament were declared 'en Englois,' and the same is noted concerning the two next years. From this small instalment of restitution the native tongue rose steadily until the time of the Statutes of Henry VII., which were all published in English.[1]

During the four hundred years since the Conquest a vast change had come over the word-store of English literature. The long prevalence of French had introduced a new element into the Vocabulary. Those numerously employed rather than numerous words which constitute the wires and pulleys of diction were still Saxon, but a large part of the presentive and performing words had come to be Romanic. If any one wishes to understand Bible English, or Elizabethan English, here should be the base of his operations. The bulk of the words that characterize the diction of the Bible and of Shakspeare are from the Romanic source, and they were assimilated during the four centuries which conduct us to this Second Culmination. I should like to set before the reader a thousand

[1] And yet there are extant manuscripts in French of the statutes of the 1st and 3rd years of Henry VII. *Statutes of the Realm*, 1810. Introduction.

words as a sample, and whether I do or do not succeed at this time in getting so many together, I will say 'A Thousand' just as a term, for I want in this place a good concrete and signal term, to designate that Romanic increment which is of great interest to the student of English literature, and very important to the aspirant after perfection in English prose.

A Thousand Romanic words acquired between 1066 *and* 1500.

abandon
abase
abashment
abate
abbacy
abbey
abbreviate
abet
abetment
abeyance
abhor
ability
abject
abjection
abjure
able
abolish
abominable
abortive
abound
abridge
abrogate
absence
absent
absolute
absolve
absorb
abstinence
abstinent
abundance
abundant
abuse
abyss
accept
access
accident
accompany
accord
according
accordingly
account
accuse
accuser
acquaint
acquire
acquit
act
action
adamant
add
address
adjacent
adjoin
adjudge
advance
advantage
adventure
adverse
adversity
advice
advocate
advowson
affect
affection
affiance
age
agree
aid
aim
air
aisle
alarm
alas
allege
alliance
alloy
ally
almanac
altar
alteration
altercation
amaze
ambition
amble
ambush
amend
amendment
amiable
amount
ample
amulet
amuse
ancestor
ancient
angle
anguish
announce
annoy
annual
anoint
antelope
anthem
antipope
antiquity
antler
apart
apostasy
apostate
apostle
apparel
appeal
appear
appearance
appease
appetite
apply
appoint
appointment
apprentice
approach
approve
arch
argue
argument
armour
armoury
arrange
array
arrear
arrearage
arrest
arrive
arsenal
art
article
artificial
artillery
ascendant
ascension
ascertain
ascribe
aspect
aspire
assail
assault
assay
assemble
assembly

assent
assign
assignment
assize
assoil
assuage
assume
assurance
astony
astray
atom
attach
attachment
attain
attemper
attendance
attire
attorney
audience
auditor
augment
augmentation
aunt
austere
austerity
authentic
author
authority
authorize
avail
avaunt
avenge
aver
averment
avoid
avow
award
azure
bachelor
balance
banish
baptize
barren
battle
beast
beauty
benign
benignity
besiege
bible
blame
blanch
blasphemy
boast
boil
bombard
bounty
brandish
brave
cabin
caitiff
calm
canal
cancel
canker
canvas
cape
capital
captain
captious
captive
car
carcass
card
cardinal
carnal
carol
carpenter
carpet
carriage
carrion
carry
case
castle
cattle
cause
cease
certain
certes
celestial
chain
chamber
champion
chance
change
charge
charity
charm
chase
chaste
chastity
cheer
chief
chivalry
chivalrous
circuit
circumstance
city
clear
cloister
collation
comfort
command
commandment
commend
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deny
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deprave
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despair
despise
despite
despoil
destiny
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disobey
disparage
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displease
disport
dispose
disposition
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dormant
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doubt
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dozen
dress
dromedary
duchy
duration
ease
easily
easy
effect
element
eloquence
embrace
emperor
empire
emprise
enchantment
endite
endure
enemy
engender
enquire
ensample
envenom
envy
equity
errant
escape
eschew
establish
estate
eternal
excellence
exchange
excuse
execution
experience
expert
expound
face
faculty
fail
faith
false
falsehood
fame
fault
feast
feign
felicity
felony
fierce
figure
final
firmament
flourish
flower
folly
fool
force
forest
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fortune
fortunate
frailty
fraternity
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garland

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glorify
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glutton
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governance
grace
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grieve
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gum
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harmony
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herald
heresy
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heritage
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innocence
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inspire
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instrument
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jailor
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jolly
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jubilee
judge
judgment
juggler
juice
just
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kerchief
laborious
labour
lace
lance
language
languish
lantern
large
largess
latitude
launch
laundress
laxative
leash
legate
legend
legion
leisure
leprous
letter
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lever
liberal
liberty
library
licence
licentiate
licorice
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litany
litter
livery
lodge
logic
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madam
magic
magistrate
magnanimity
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magnet
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mail
maintain
majesty
malady
male
malice
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manifest
manner
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map
mariner
market
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marvel
marvellous
masculine
mason
mass
master
mastery
matrimony
matron
matter
meagre
measurable
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meat
mechanic
meddle

mediation
medicine
megrim
melody
member
memory
menace
mention
mercer
mercenary
merchandize
merchant
mercy
merit
message
messenger
metal
mine (verb)
miner
mineral
minister
minstrel
minute
miracle
mirror
mischief
miserable
mistress
modify
moist
molest
mollification
moment
money
monster
moral
mortal
mover
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natural
nature
necessary
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noble
note
notify
nourish
nurse
obey
obstacle
obstinate
occasion
offence
offend
office
officer
opinion
oppress
oppression
ordain
order
ordinance
organ
original
orison
ornament
ostler
pace
pain
paint
pair
pale
pamper
parliament
parochial
part
party
pass
passion
patent
patience
patient
patron
peace
peaceable
penance
people
peradventure
perfect
perish
perpetually
perseverance
persevere
person
perverse
pestilence
philosopher
philosophical
philosophy
physician
piteous
pittance
pity
place
plain
planet
pleasance
pleasant
please
plenteous
plenty
poignant
point
pomp
poor
pope
port
portraiture
portray
possible
possibility
pouch
pound
powder
power
practiser
praise
pray
prayer
preach
preface
prefect
prelate
presence
present, *vb.*
presume
presumption
pride
prince
princess
principal
prison
privily
privity
privy
prize
proceed
process
proffer
profit
progression
promise
prosperity
prove
prudent
publish
purchase
pure
purge
purpose
purvey
quaint
quantity
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question
quit
rancour
range
ransom
ravening
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reason
receive
recommend
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redress
reflection
refuse
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rehearse
release
religion
remedy
remember
remembrance
remission
renown
rent
repent
repentance
report
reporter
reprove
reputation

request
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resistance
resort
respite
restore
reverence
reverent
riches
robe
rose
rote
rout
royally
royalty
rude
rule
ruler
sacrament
sacrifice
safe
saint
salvation
sanctuary
sanguine
sapience
sauce
save
savour
scarcity
school
scholar
science
season
second
secular
secure
sentence
sergeant
sermon
servant
serve
service
session
siege
sign
similitude
simple
sir
sire
skirmish
sober
sojourn
solace
solemn
solemnity
sort
sound, *subst.*
sounding
sovereignty
space
special
specially
specious
spend
spicery
spirit
spouse
squire
stable, *adj.*
state
stately
stature
statute
story
strait
study
subject
substance
subtilly
subtilty
subtle
succession
sudden
sue
suffer
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suffrage
suffragan
superfluity
supper
suppose
surety
suspicious
table
talent
taste
tavern
tempest
temporal
tempt
tender
tent
term
theatre
tormentor
tower
traitress
translate
translation
travail
treason
tributary
turn
tyranny
tyrant
usage
usurpation
usury
utility
vain
vanish
vanity
vary
very
vice
victory
victual
village
villany
violence
virgin
virginity
virtue
virtuous
visit
vital
voice
vouchsafe
vow
voyage
vulgar
wafer
wager
wages
wait
war
warble
warrant
warren
waste
wicket
wince
zeal

I call these words Romanic, to signify that they come to us (in the main), not from the Latin of books, but from the vernacular Latin of the colloquial French. This has already been indicated in the First Chapter.

But here I must again call attention to the fact, in order that I may explain a defect in the presentation of this Vocabulary. I desired to place these words before the reader

in a form not too strange and repellent; and therefore they are not presented in the exact form they wore in the fifteenth century. Since then they have undergone the new fashion of later times; they have been refashioned, respelt, relatinized. If 'relatinization' provokes cavil, as being not exact, because 'Latin' in the strict sense (that is, literary Roman) they never were, I beg the objector to help us to a happier term.

To exemplify the refashioning process I will quote a few instances. The words, *adventure, advice, advocate, advowson* were in the fifteenth century written *aventure, avis, avocat, avoweson*, and the prefix *ad-* was restored by Latin scholarship after 1500. This movement often overshot itself, and put an *ad-* where it had no right, and thus we got the perverted forms *advance, advantage*, where the true initial preposition was not *ad* but *ab*. But in *assoile*, the *ab* was restored, and it became *absolve*.

A droll product of this refashioning is the word *aisle*, which before 1500 had been written *ele, hele*, after the French *ele, eele*, from Latin *ala* (wing), but in the relatinizing time it got associated not so much with *axilla* (which would have been just) but with French *isle* and Latin *insula*, and hence the prodigious *aisle*.

In like manner words beginning with *en-* were generally relatinized to *in-* or *im-*; and this movement too was in several instances carried to excess and misapplied. It was all very well to 'restore' such words as *enspire, entend, entent*, and write them in what was then thought a 'scholarly' fashion, as *inspire, intend, intent*, because in the second part of such words there was nothing incongruous with a Latin prefix. But when the movement was extended to *embalm, employ, endite, enquire, ensure*, and others like them, in which the body of the compound was irreclaimably Romanesque, and these were relatinized to *imbalm, imploy, indite, inquire, insure*; the hybrid effect made itself felt and provoked a reaction, not strong and prompt, but half-hearted and irresolute, which resulted in vacillations, of which even at the present day we are not yet quit. In some cases the erroneous corrections have established themselves, as *indite, inquire*; while *insure* divides the ground with *ensure*. Some other less conspicuous

vacillations there are, which have arisen from the same train of causes, as *despatch* and *dispatch*.

A picturesque but mistaken restoration for the Old French *essemple*, was *ensample*; which has, however, since been relatinized to *example*.

Consonants which had dropped out in the natural course of phonetic progress were now reinserted, though in some instances to address themselves only to the eye. Thus *auter*, *asaut*, *aument*, *delitable*, *dette*, *doute*, *faute*, *indite*, were corrected to *altar*, *assault*, *augment*, *delectable*, *debt*, *doubt*, *fault*, *indict*, and many others.

In the case of *licour* we relatinized to the eye by writing *liquor*, but the pronunciation has not yet shaken off the Romanic tradition. A droll misapplication of the Latin *qu* was made in the word *liquorice* the amended form of *licoris*.

Nouns in *-tion* were written *-cion*, *-cyoun*, as *alteracion*, *altercacyoun*, *ambicioun*, and the medieval sound is still kept to the ear.

These examples will serve to explain how it is that fifteenth century English, whether prose or verse, wears an aspect strange and remote, whereby its distance is exaggerated and its near relation to us is shrouded in obscurity.

I must close this memorable century with the important observation that we are here at the very heart and focus of the whole movement. The Fifteenth Century made English Prose to be what it substantially is at the present day. This Second culmination has a character very different from that of the First culmination in the Tenth century. The product of that first culmination was essentially a diction of the upper and the privileged class, but this second culmination on the contrary produced a diction which was the voice of the body of the nation. This is the point where it is most useful to bring it into comparison with French Prose. We have seen that French Prose began with the thirteenth century, so long after the first culmination of English Prose. But its progress was very rapid, for it basked in all the sunniest influences of the age of chivalry. Indeed, this is precisely the key to French prose, it is the voice of chivalry. Quantities, enormous quantities of French verse were produced, but of such a quality

as to be a mere pabulum to feed the mightier prose. French prose grew and developed with medieval romance and history, and at the epoch where we are now arrived it had culminated, and taken a standard form, which has determined its character ever since.

French prose is superior to English prose in whatever sense courts and camps are superior to rustic homesteads and borough corporations. English prose is broader than French prose precisely as agriculture and commerce have a broader surface of contact with the continual interests of mankind. The depression of centuries, which had (comparatively speaking) kept English out of courts and camps, leaving open to it the chiefest parts of the field of human life, religion, labour, business, and politics, though mostly local;—this had resulted in the production of a language which sprang from the very heart of the nation, from those who keep the world agoing and conduct its most necessary affairs. The English prose to which we have now attained at the close of the Fifteenth century was the most popular vehicle of communication among men that was ever produced upon so extensive an area. This broad quality of popularity is one that Latin never possessed, least of all in its golden age;—and indeed there is but one example either in the ancient or in the modern world that can be compared with it. Greek prose from Herodotus to Demosthenes had this quality of popularity; Greek literature grew up encircled by the sympathies of the body of the people and identified with great popular assemblies, and this it was that gave it that nameless power whereby it conquered the Conquerors, and Greek attained the position of a universal language.

CHAPTER XII

THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH PROSE—TO ITS THIRD CULMINATION

English Prose of the Sixteenth Century—A new Era—Bible Translations—Tyndale's estimate of English—The Psalter in the Common Prayer Book—Luther's Bible and German literary Prose—English legal diction—The Relative Pronoun *who*—Why did authors like Sir Thomas More and Bacon write in Latin?—Euphuism—Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia'—Hooker's great sentences—Bacon's 'Advancement of Learning'—'An Apologie for Poetrie.'

English Prose of the Seventeenth Century—Bible of 1611—The dominance of classicism—Milton—Jeremy Taylor—Cowley—Isaak Walton—Quaintness—The Reaction—Journalism—Defoe—Roger L'Estrange—Tillotson and Dryden—How far my account differs from Mr. Matthew Arnold's—The close of this century a memorable epoch.

English Prose of the Eighteenth Century—Poetry annexed by Prose—Supremacy of Prose—Affectation of degraded diction—New interest in the details of Prose—Addison or Johnson?—Samples and varieties of Johnson's prose.

English Prose of the Nineteenth Century—A Third Culmination recognized—The Johnsonian style the basis of subsequent variations—Eustace—Chalmers. 1. The Short sentence and the Paragraph—The periodical press—2. The Restitution of English—Dr. Charles Mackay—The anti-Johnsonese sentiment—Alarm at the revival of English.

A Conclusion of practical utility.

Every language of a learned nation necessarily divides itself into diction scholastick and popular, grave and familiar, elegant and gross; and from a nice distinction of these different parts arises a great part of the beauty of style.—Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets*, 'Dryden.'

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE Third great era of our Prose receives its character from that wide diffusion of classical taste through the channels of education, which was the natural consequence of the Revival of Ancient Learning in the Fifteenth century. The general establishment of Grammar Schools, that is to say Schools of Latin, in the provincial towns, is mostly associated with the name of Edward VI. It did not take many generations to develop a scholastic English prose which

stood apart from the type of the Fifteenth century, even while it was built upon it. A learned style *within* the native language was the new thing that now appeared. In the former era, the learned style was either Latin or French, while English prose was homely and much on a level. This does not mean that there were *no* shades of gradation—there certainly are such, for instance, in the Paston Letters—but that they did not form distinct orders of style—such distinction could only be attained at that time by writing in one of the two scholastic languages. But now within the vernacular itself began to appear a classical, learned, scholastic style; and the full significance of this new incident will not develop itself until we come to the Seventeenth century.

With regard to the Sixteenth century, there is one comprehensive observation to be made at the outset, namely this, that the Prose of this century is all more or less governed by the standard of the Fifteenth. At the same time, as foreign influences make themselves felt, and especially the Latin influence, superficial modifications keep crowding in; but it is nevertheless true all through the century that the Standard of the Fifteenth forms the basis and the background. The part, where it is most disguised, is in that spasmodic interlude which goes by the name of Euphuism. But it is not in the power either of pedantry or of learning to break the connection of the Sixteenth with the previous century. Even in the diction of Hooker, the author most possessed of Latinity, the assertion will be found to hold good, that the basis of his composition is nothing else but Fifteenth century English.

But there is a name in this century which is more important for our purpose than Hooker's or any other. It is the name of William Tyndale. If Hooker with all his stateliness of classicism is based upon Fifteenth century English, if the same is still true in the seventeenth century of the diction of Clarendon and even of Milton, and in the later centuries too of Johnson and of Macaulay, if the broad and deep substratum of all our modern Prose is a concrete of the Fifteenth century, it is all to be traced to the handiwork of William Tyndale. For Tyndale is the true father of the English Bible, he translated the New Testament himself, and although other hands besides

his own were put to the Old Testament, yet it is all the offspring of his resolve and it was he who pitched the keynote of it.

There is a passage in the Preface to Tyndale's 'Obedience of a Christian man,' wherein he contends against his adversaries on the subject of Scripture translation, and incidentally discovers to us something of the estimation in which he held the capabilities of the mother tongue, and of the insight with which he perceived its superiority to the Latin, at least for translation out of Hebrew and Greek.

> The sermons which thou readest in the Acts of the Apostles, were no doubt preached in the mother tongue. Why then might they not be written in the mother tongue? As, if one of us preach a good sermon, why may it not be written? St. Jerome also translated the Bible into his mother tongue; why may not we also? They will say it cannot be translated into our tongue, it is so rude. It is not so rude as they are false. For the Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than with the Latin. And the properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin. The manner of speaking is both one: so that in a thousand places thou needest not but to translate it into the English, word for word, when thou must seek a compass in the Latin, and yet shalt have much work to translate it wellfavouredly, so that it have the same grace and sweetness, sense and pure understanding with it, in the Latin, as it hath in the Hebrew. A thousand parts better may it be translated into the English, than into the Latin.

William Tyndale, whose years are from 1477 to 1536, is the medium between the fifteenth century and all after time. In him the best powers of the ripened language are harvested, recapitulated, and transmitted in a consecrated vessel to all posterity.

The century of translation and revision which he inaugurated produced a variety of versions and editions, about which the curious may find information in bibliographical works like that of Cotton. But among all these versions there are two, which have had a determining influence upon all the forms of our subsequent literature. These are, the Great Bible of 1539, and the Revision of 1611. If I were to enlarge upon the beneficial operation of the Bible of 1611 which is our present Bible, I could hardly help running into the current phraseology of a well-worn theme, and therefore I will assume that

this is already familiar to the reader. But I am sure there are very few people who have noticed how much we are still under the goodly shadow of the Book of 1539. When the Common Prayer Book was arranged, all the Scripture portions were naturally taken from the one and only recognized Bible, that of 1539. At the Savoy Conference in 1661, the Epistles and Gospels were changed to the Revision of 1611, but the Psalms of 1539 were deliberately retained, and are in use to this day. The rest of Scripture is redd in the ears of the congregation, whereas this enters not only with the hearing of the ear, but also at the eye and through the organs of speech. Minor alterations have crept in, but the identity is still preserved, as will appear by the following specimen.

Psalm cvii. 23–32, *from the Great Bible of* 1539.

They þ^t go downe to the see in shyppes, and occupie their busynesse in great waters: These men se the worckes of the Lord, and his wonders in the deape. For at his word þ^e stormy wynd ariseth, which lyfteth vp the waues therof. They are caryed vp to heauen, and downe agayne to the deape, their soul melteth awaye because of the trouble. They rele to and fro, and stacker lyke a droncken man, and are at their wittes ende. So whan they crye vnto þ^e Lord in their trouble, he delyuereth them out of their distresse. For he maketh the storme to ceasse, so þ^t the waues therof are styll. Then are they glad because they be at rest, and so he bryngeth them vnto the hauen where they wolde be. O that men wold therfore prayse the Lorde for hys goodnes, and declare the wondres þ^t he doth for the children of men. That they wolde exalte him also in the congregacyon of þ^e people, and loaue him in the seat of the elders.

There is a general analogy between the circumstances of England and Germany in regard to the possession of a popular Bible in the vernacular, and it seems only natural to look towards German literature for a parallel, when we are considering the influence of such a Bible upon the literary diction of the nation.

It was in the Sixteenth century that German began to form a literary prose, and the contemplation of it cannot be separated from the name of that great Reformer who made the Bible accessible to the German people. Not that Luther's was the first German Bible. There is a printed German Bible

of the year 1466, and it had passed through fifteen editions before 1522, the year in which Luther finished his translation of the New Testament. But it was for the most part a mechanical version, which was of little help to Luther in his work. He it was who first gave the Scriptures to his people in living German, after having passed them through the medium of his own thought. 'Luther was an enthusiastic lover and admirer of his mother-tongue, and he spared no trouble to make his translation a monument of German style. He devoted himself to the work with the greatest seriousness and conscientiousness; he tried to absorb the spirit of the original, and his thorough knowledge of the popular tongue, together with his firm resolution not to write for the court or for scholars, but for the people, enabled him to make his Bible a true people's book.' [1]

The historian of German literature says that this great national work laid the foundation of a common culture for all ranks of society, and opened a whole intellectual world to the people. But when he goes on to say that Luther's Bible permanently fixed the literary language of Germany, we must be careful to understand this sentence in its true meaning. There is among literary men in England a vague idea on this subject which admits of and calls for something in the way of a more exact definition. Luther's Bible had the effect of finally establishing the High German as the one language of German literature;— in this sense and in no other, it is truly said to have fixed the literary language of Germany. Before Luther's time the High German had enjoyed a literary pre-eminence, but it had not been able to exclude the literary use of other dialects. The dialect of Luther's Bible became the authority for all writers and printers. It superseded the 'Schwyzer Dütsch' in which Zwingli had written; it superseded Platt Deutsch in the north, and the dialect of Cologne in the north-west.

But while the Dialect of Luther became supreme, the same cannot be said of the cast of his diction. There are few modern German works that are written in the popular vein

[1] W. Scherer, *History of German Literature*, tr. Mrs. F. C. Conybeare (1866), vol. i. p. 274.

of Luther's Bible. The author to whom we should assign the palm in this direction is Jacob Grimm, and particularly with reference to his *Fairy Tales*. These are written in popular German; but as to the bulk of German prose literature, if there is anything popular in it, we fail to discover it. The diction of the Imperial Chancery was the recognized model of literary prose before Luther's time, and we are much mistaken if the German prose of the learned to this day does not savour more of Chancery-diction than of Luther's Bible. The Chancery-diction first, and upon that the emulation of the Latin and the French, have made of German learned diction that marvellous and indescribable thing that it now is. It is not the language of a nation, but of a learned caste. Of this learned language Mr. Laing (*Notes of a Traveller*, Third Series) thus wrote in 1852:—

> The two classes speak and think in different languages. The cultivated German language, the language of German literature, is not the language of the common man, nor even of the man far up in the middle ranks of society,—the farmer, tradesman, shopkeeper.

Speaking of German Literature, Mr. Henry Buckle (*History of Civilization*, p. 219) said in 1858:—

> Their great authors address themselves not to their country, but to each other. They are sure of a select and learned audience, and they use what, in reality, is a learned language: they turn their mother-tongue into a dialect, eloquent indeed, and very powerful, but so difficult, so subtle, and so full of complicated inversions, that to their own lower classes it is utterly incomprehensible.

The fact is, Luther's Bible has not had the kind or degree of effect upon literary German that the English Bible has had upon literary English. And this difference is explained by two very obvious considerations.

(1) The popularity of Luther's translation was the work of an individual, a man of genius, who went about to collect and to bring together the elements of a popular diction. His aim was attained; he sought to make the Bible known to the people, and he did it. But to become a general literary influence, it had neither the start nor the career which our Bible had.

The popular diction of the English Bible was the broad result of diffused and long-ripening social conditions; it was already a truly national diction, not made up by any man, but only inherited and cultivated and refined by passing through the mind of our great translator, William Tyndale.

(2) And if in the start Luther's Bible was less advantageously situated than ours was, for the exercise of general literary influence, much more was it at a disadvantage in the circumstances of its career. With us, two selected products out of the travail of a century, the Psalter of 1539 and the matured Revision of 1611, are not only circulated in print, and lodged in families as household books, and used for reading aloud in family and public worship, all which is true of Luther's Bible; but our Psalter is recited or chanted by the congregation itself, and the English Bible is redd all through every year. The large amount and the comprehensive area of Scripture-reading which distinguishes the Services of the English Church from those of all other Reformed Churches, is a circumstance which has exercised a very profound influence upon our utterances in literature.

And hence it has come to pass, that whereas we have left our Chancery-diction a long way behind us, and our literary language has taken a form quite distinct from it, the literary German still retains a savour of Chancery, and there is nothing in English so much like German prose as a legal document. The following lease is interesting as an early specimen of the kind, and it is one that is not easy to find elsewhere. I think it has never been printed but once, and that was in the Proceedings of the Bath Field Club, for which it was prepared by the Rev. H. H. Winwood.

1525—*A Deed in the possession of Edward Howse Esq., conveying a lease of Pasture land.*

To all true Christen people to whome this present wrytyng Indentour shall come William Hollewaye by Gode is sufferaunce Priour of the Monasterye and Cathedrall Church of Saynt Saviour and of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paule of Bathe within the Countie of Somerset and Conuent and Chapitre of the same place senden greting in our lorde gode everlastyng Knowe ye that we the

forsaide Priour and Conuent with our hoole assent and consent haue grauntede dimisede and to ferme letten and by this present writing Indentede confirmede to Richarde Cokke of Walcott by syde Bathe aforesaide yoman Margaret his wyfe Jeffreye and William the yonger of that name there sonnes all the Somerleyes or pasture of our close or pasture called the Hayes that is to saye yerely from Thannunciation of our lady unto the ffeaste of Saynt Michell Tharchangell togither with the hool pasture and grasse of our Medowe callede Sidenham that is to saye yerely frome eight dayes after the ffeaste of Thannunciation of oure lady untill the ffeaste of Saynt Martyne the busshop in wynter Excepte oone acre of Mede lyeng in the South syde of the saide Sidenham whiche acre John Bygge now holdeth And excepte also foure goode wayne lodes yerely of the finest and beste haye there growyng for our hoggesfloke of Lyncombe to be mowede rerede made and caryede by the ffermour of our saide ffloke for the tyme beyng And excepte the yerely pasturyng and fedyng of foure oxen of our fferme of Mawdelene and of iiij other oxen of our fferme of Gules whan the saide leyes shall be broken up And excepte the yerely somer pasture of oone kowe of Gybbes in the pasturyng in the saide Hayes And excepte also the tythes for info[rm]nts there due and yerely by theym to be paiede as custome hathe be to us the saide Priour and Conuent and namely to the Chauntre of the saide Cathedrall Churche for the tyme beyng and to our Successours which aforesaide hayes and Sidenham bene sett and doo lye within our lordeship of Lyncombe

To haue and to holde all the forsaide Hayes and Sidenham in maner and forme aboue expressede excepte before exceptede to the forsaide Richarde Margarett Jeffreye and Williame weill quietly and in pease durying there naturall lyves and the naturall lyfe of oone of theym longest lyves successively. Yelding therfore yerely and payeing to us the saide Priour and Conuent and to oure successours durying the terme aforesaide within the chapell of All Saynte situate within oure saide monastereye foure pounds of goode and laufull moneye of Englande in the ffeaste of the Natiuitie of oure Lorde Jesu Christe and of the Natiuitie of Saynt John the Baptiste by evyn portions And itt shal be weill laufull to the saide Richarde Margarett Jeffreye and Williame and to euery of theym to take and make att all tymes as nede shall requyre duryng the saide terme under Tenantes to and of the saide grounde Soo that nottwithstonding they the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame shall stonde and remayne allweyes immediate Tenantes unto us the said Priour and Conuent and to our Successours accordyng to the forme and force of this Indentour And lykwyse itt is understandede couenauntede and agreede betwene

the saide parties that the Hoggesfloke of Lyncombe shall duryng the saide terme goo lye and pasture in all the saide pastures of Hayes and Sidenham lyke as they haue doone in tyme paste whan the saide pastures were in the lorde is handes And the lorde is Tenantes shall yerely duryng the saide terme mowe rere and make all suche grasse and haye there as theye haue doone in tyme paste whan the saide pastures were in the lorde is handes Soo that thereby the lorde is owne werkes elles where and woode carriage be nott nestoppede att any tyme

And the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame and eury of theym shall from tyme [to tyme] duryng the saide terme att there owne propure costes and charges make repaire and mayntene all suche hedges and diches as appurteign or belonge to the saide pastures And soo shall in thende of the saide terme leve theym weill and sufficiently made repairede and mayntenede And if itt happen the saide Reparations to be vndoone by the space of a moneth after admonytion gyven therof by us the saide Priour and Conuent and our Successours or by our or there officers then shall the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame or oone of theym by whome suche faulte shalbe made forfeit and paye to us the saide Priour and Conuent and our Successours in the name of A payne for the furste tyme VI s VIII d And lykwyse after the seconde and thirde admonytion if defaulte be made to be leviede and paiede of the goodes and catalles of theym by whome suche forfeitour shall be made And if itt chaunse the saide yerely rent of foure poundes to be behynde unpaiede in parte or in all by the space of a moneth after any terme or ffeaste that itt is due to be paiede Then itt shalbe laufull to us the saide Priour and Conuent and to our Successours or laufull Deputies in that behalue to entre into the saide pastures or into any parcell therof and distreigne And the distresses there founde take dryve carye and bere aweye And with us reteigne and kepe styll untill that we of the saide Rent soo beyng behynde and unpaiede with our reasonable costes susteignede in that behalue be fully content satisfiede and paiede And if itt chaunse the saide yerely Rent of foure poundes to be behynde unpaiede in parte or in all by the space of eight wekes after any terme or feaste that itt is due to be paiede And in the meane season no sufficient distresse for the saide Rent soo beyng due can upon the saide pastures be founde or if after the aboue namede thirde forfeitour defaulte be made and founde in the saide Reparations of hedgyng and dichyng or if all other couenantes of the parte of the saide Richard Margaret Jeffreye and Williame aboue expressede be not kepte and fullfillede Then itt shalbe laufull to us the saide Priour and Conuent and to our Suc-

cessours or laufull Deputies in that behalue to reentre into all the foresaide pastures and into every parcell therof And theym reseise repossesse and reteigne in oure owne handes as in our former or furste astate And the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame therof and frome utterly to expulse amove avoide and putt owte this present Indentour in any wyse nottwithstondyng And furthermore to arrest and take into our handes all the goodes and catalles movable and unmovable wheresoeur they be founde of the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame and of every of theym for the Rentes and averages that then shalbe due And theym soo taken reteigne and kepe styll untill that we of the saide Rentes and averages with our reasonable costes and expenses borne and susteignede in that behalue be fully content satisfiede and paiede

And we the saide Priour and Conuent and our Successours shall the saide pastures duryng the saide terme to the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame in maner and forme aboue expressede ageynst all people waraunt acquyte and defende by this presentes And moreovere knowe ye that we the said Priour and Conuent by this presents haue ordeignede deputede and assignede our weilbeloued in Christe John Gaye of Lyncombe and John Bygge our true and laufull Attorneyes joyntlye and severally to entre into the saide pastures or any parte or parcell therof and seisyn therin for to take and after suche seisyn therin taken to delyver in oure name full and peasable possession and seisyn of the same and every parcell therof to the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame or to oone of theym accordyng to the forme and effect of this Indentour Ratifyeng affermyng and approuyng all and euery thyng that our saide Attorneyes or oone of theym shall doo in the delyueraunce of the saide possession by this presentes In Witnes wherof to thoone parte of this present Indentour remaynnyng with the saide Richarde Margaret Jefferye and Williame we the saide Priour and Conuent have putt our comen or Conuent Seale And to thother parte of the same Indentour remaynyng with us the saide Priour and Conuent the saide Richarde Margaret Jeffreye and Williame haue putt there Seales Geuen in our Chapitre house within our Monasterye of Bathe aforsaide the xvth daye of August in the seventeenth yere of the Rigne of our soueraigne lorde Kyng Henry the Eight.

Indorsed

Somerset. William Coxe lease for the Somer pasture of Hayes and Sidenham.

For a particular note of syntactical progress in this century,

let it be observed that the pronoun *who*, which was anciently an Interrogative, now became established as a Relative. Some years ago Dr. Weymouth wrote a paper on this subject, in which he produced a body of negative evidence tending to prove that it was an innovation of the seventeenth century. Dr. Furnivall became interested, and when that keen investigator went upon the track, he carried the history of this feature a century further back, to the date of Lord Berners' translation of Froissart in 1523. Of the examples cited in proof I will here transcribe only the first.

I syr Johñ Froissart wyll treat and recorde an hystory of great louage and preyse: but, or I begyn, I require the Sauyour of all the worlde, who of nothyng created al thynges, that he wyll gyue me &c.

But, while it is very interesting to follow such a spirited leader as Dr. Furnivall up to the very well-head of a new usage, it is still the broader aspect of the feature that is of the greatest historical import, and we may accept from Dr. Weymouth the general statement, that this usage was an innovation of the seventeenth century. In the Bible of 1611, the elder *which* retains its undisputed possession.

About 1536 John Leland, being upon his commission as the King's Antiquary, thus described his progress from Bruton in Somersetshire to Cadbury:

I passed over a brook by a stone bridge, and came straight to North Cadbyrie, a village, and about a mile farther to South Cadbyrie, and there a little beyond lie great crestes of hills. . . . . At the very south ende of the Chirche of South Cadbyrie standith Camalette, sumtyme a famose Town or Castelle, upon a very Torre or Hille, wonderfully enstrengthened of nature. To the which be two enterings up by very stepe way, one by North East, and another by South West. The very Roote of the Hille whereon this Forteresse stode is more than a Mile in Cumpace. In the upper part of the Toppe of the Hille lie four Diches or Trenches, and a baulky Walle of Yerth betwixt every one of them. In the very Toppe of the Hille above all the Trenches is a magna area or campus of a twenty acres or more by estimation, where in divers Places men may see Fundations, and rudera of Walls. There was much dusky blew stone that the people of the villages thereby hath carried away. The top within the upper wall is twenty acres of ground and more,

and hath been often plowed and borne very good corne. Much gold, sylver and copper of the Romaine coins hath been found there in plowing, and likewise in the feldes of the rootes of this hille, with many other antique things, and especial by East. There was found in Hominum Memoria a horse-shoe of silver at Camallate. The people can tell nothing there but that they have heard say that Arture much resorted to Camalat.—Quoted by Rev. J. A. Bennett in his 'Camelot,' 1889.

But (it may be asked) if the high estimate which I have made of our prose in the Sixteenth century be anything more than a fond overweening eulogy, if it be the plain and sober truth of the case, how are we to account for the fact that men like Sir Thomas More and Francis Bacon wrote books in Latin. This has been put as an argument that they were not contented with the literary faculty of their own native tongue at that time, and that they recurred to Latin as the more satisfactory instrument of expression. Those who use this argument do not seem to consider that it is equally applicable to the seventeenth, the eighteenth, and even to the nineteenth century, for in all these centuries English authors have in some instances elected to write in Latin. It is not so long ago that Dr. Donaldson wrote in Latin his work on the book of Jasher, and Professor Conington wrote criticisms on Greek Plays in Latin; and the Lectures of the Poetry Professor at Oxford were delivered in Latin until Mr. Matthew Arnold discontinued the old practice. Of these 'Prælectiones' there is at least one volume that is still a book which men take up in order to read for the pleasure and the interest of it. In the Lectures of John Keble as Poetry professor we see a Latin book that has been written in the present century, and that is still part of the living heritage of the reading world. I should not be at all taken by surprize if I were this very evening to fall into conversation with a man who had carefully perused Keble's 'Prælectiones.'

The act of writing a book in Latin was not to be taken as a reflection upon the sufficiency of the native prose in the sixteenth century any more than it is now in the nineteenth. Then as now, it is quite certain that every author who had really something to say could say it, if not with so much

éclat in English as in Latin, yet certainly with far more satisfaction to his own thought, and also with more efficiency as an address to the understanding of the English reader, however familiar such reader might be with Latin. The language that could match the thoughts of Shakspeare, could certainly have sufficed for all that More or Bacon or any other philosopher could possibly have to say. But in the highest studies English readers were few; and able Englishmen naturally desired a wider public. This was their real and obvious motive, when they put aside the mother tongue, and preferred to write in the common language of the learned world.

(In the next century, in the year 1669, when 'the delegacy for printing of books' offered Antony Wood 100*l.* for his 'History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford,' they, guided chiefly by Dr. Fell, stipulated 'that he would suffer the book to be translated into Latin,' contending that in a Latin dress it would have a better prospect of adding to 'the honour of the University in foreign countries.'[1] This had been the feeling ever since the revival of classical learning, and it caused More and Bacon to write some of their books in Latin as the academical tradition of it caused Keble still to lecture in Latin when he was Professor of Poetry.)

In the last quarter of this century there started up a grotesque fashion which almost strikes us now as a transient phase of madness. It was the greatest of all the eccentricities that were caused by the upheaval of the Renaissance. The Euphuistic manner of diction and conversation ought to be familiar to all readers, through Shakspeare's ridicule of it in the character of Holofernes, and Sir Walter Scott's in the character of Sir Piercie Shafton. The romance of *Euphues* by John Lyly, from which this craze took its name, appeared in two parts; the first part in 1578, and the second in 1583. Lyly's style is short and sententious. His diction is characterized by studied antitheses of balanced sentences aiming largely at parallelisms of recurrent sounds, in which alliteration bears a considerable part. A short specimen of this pedantry will suffice for our present purpose.—'Although

[1] *Wood's City of Oxford.* Edited by Andrew Clark (Oxford Historical Society), 1889, p. 19.

hitherto, Euphues, I have shrined thee in my heart for a trustie friend, I will shunne thee hereafter as a trothless foe.' According to Landmann, the elements of Euphuism are 'parison, antithesis, and transverse alliteration.' The last of the three terms he applies to the sentence just quoted.[1]

We may perhaps be permitted to indulge a moment's impatience, when such indulgence furnishes illustration of the subject, and this is my apology for letting 'pedantry' stand; —because perhaps nothing is more illustrative than a spontaneous outburst when a book really provokes a distinct feeling. But we must not suppose that the case of Euphuism is to be dispatched by a stigma. For Euphuism is no singular or arbitrary phenomenon; it is a natural and recurrent feature in the development of great literatures. Moreover, it is not exactly the 'euphuism' of *Euphues* that fatigues us; it is the poverty and pettiness and pretentiousness of his euphuism. We owe Lyly a debt on account of the smart and bold title which he has furnished for expressing the occasional outbreak of æstheticism in literary diction. When a genius has seized the passing wave-crest of such a modish enthusiasm, he has left to all time a conspicuous work of art. This I take to be the true account of that distinction which marks the styles of two great Roman historians, Sallust and Tacitus. We have ourselves had other exhibitions of this kind, which have been more genuinely 'euphuistic' than that Elizabethan display which set the name. For Lyly's euphuism was only so far a genuine example as it testified to the preparedness of the soil. The manner itself seems to have been borrowed from Spanish literature, especially from the poet Gongora, after whom Spanish euphuism was called Gongorism. But the Quaintness of the seventeenth century was also a euphuism, and *that* was a true home product; so was the euphuism of Johnsonese, which perhaps we may consider the last fully developed display of the kind, although there was at one time an appearance as if Carlylese would engender a nineteenth century euphuism.

While the fashion lasted, it was like an epidemic, but it had worn itself out by ten years' end. In 1589 Warner (*Albion's England*, Pref.) utters his complaint against Euphuism

[1] Landmann, *Euphues* (1887), p. xvii.

in euphuistic phrases: 'Onely this error may be thought hatching in our English, that to runne on the letter we often runne from the matter; and being over prodigall in similes, we become lesse profitable in sentences and more prolixious to sense.' The book which set up a counter-attraction and weaned the fashionable world from the seductions of Euphuism was Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590). It was calculated to create a diversion by the extreme oppositeness of its characteristics. Long and sometimes almost interminable sentences; external descriptions, especially scenery; elaborate circumlocutions; rhapsodical personifications—the novelty of all this was so captivating that it rapidly attained a complete ascendency, and so it came to pass that the *Arcadia* supplanted *Euphues* in those circles in which it had been a fashionable book, and the new fascination out-charmed the old. As we have had occasion to quote the *Arcadia* in a previous chapter, it will not be necessary to add a specimen here. Of the rapidity with which the new style was assimilated we have a proof in a work that appeared before the end of the same year 1590, a book which is famous as having furnished material to Shakspeare. Lodge's *Rosalynde* presents Euphuism in a form which is already modified by the influence of the *Arcadia*.

It is in Hooker's style that we see the effect of classical studies at once in its most pronounced and in its most favourable aspect. Here we must note that straining after the long and pregnant sentence which classic eloquence suggests as the ideal of high discourse. It is not, however, until the next century that this particular tendency attains its most extreme development.

He that goeth about to perswade a multitude, that they are not so well-governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable Hearers; because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of Regiment is subject; but the secret lets and difficulties, which in publick proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily the judgement to consider. And because such as openly reprove supposed disorders of State, are taken for Principal Friends to the Common Benefit of all, and for men that carry singular Freedom of Mind: Under this fair and plausible colour, whatsoever they utter, passeth for good and currant.

That which wanteth in the weight of their Speech, is supplied by the aptness of Mens minds to accept and believe it. Whereas on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time, and speak in favour of the present State, because thereby we either hold or seek preferment; but also to bear such Exceptions as Minds so averted before-hand, usually take against that which they are loth should be poured into them.

Albeit therefore, much of that we are to speak in this present cause, may seem to a number perhaps tedious, perhaps obscure, dark and intricate, (for many talk of the Truth, which never sounded the depth from whence it springeth: And therefore when they are led thereunto, they are soon weary, as men drawn from those beaten paths wherewith they have been inured;) yet this may not so far prevail, as to cut off that which the matter it self requireth, howsoever the nice humour of some be therewith pleased or no. They unto whom we shall seem tedious, are in no wise injured by us, because it is in their own hands to spare that labour which they are not willing to endure. And if any complain of obscurity, they must consider, that in these Matters it cometh no otherwise to pass, than in sundry the works both of Art, and also of Nature, where that which hath greatest force in the very things we see, is notwithstanding it self oftentimes not seen. The stateliness of Houses, the goodliness of Trees, when we behold them, delighteth the eye; but that Foundation which beareth up the one, that Root which ministreth unto the other nourishment and life, is in the bosom of the Earth concealed; and if there be occasion at any time to search into it, such labour is then more necessary than pleasant, both to them which undertake it, and for the lookers on. In like manner, the use and benefit of good Laws, all that live under them, may enjoy with delight and comfort, albeit the grounds and first original causes from whence they have sprung, be unknown, as to the greatest part of men they are. But when they who withdraw their obedience, pretend, That the Laws which they should obey, are corrupt and vicious: For better examination of their quality, it behoveth the very Foundation and Root, the highest Well-Spring and Fountain of them to be discovered. Which because we are not oftentimes accustomed to do, when we do it, the pains we take are more needful a great deal than acceptable, and the Matters which we handle, seem by reason of newness, (till the mind grow better acquainted with them) dark, intricate and unfamiliar. For as much help whereof as may be in this case, I have

endeavoured throughout the Body of this whole Discourse, that every former part might give strength unto all that follow, and every latter bring some light unto all before: So that if the judgements of men do but hold themselves in suspence, as touching these first more General Meditations, till in order they have perused the rest that ensue: what may seem dark at the first, will afterwards be found more plain, even as the latter particular decisions will appear, I doubt not, more strong, when the other have been read before.—Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Policie*, 1594.

The mighty sentence comes forth in the climax of argument or in the summary of discourse, as in the two following sentences which round off a sectional close. These are, perhaps, the greatest efforts of the kind in Hooker, but in the following century there were sentences of still larger dimensions.

Wherefore the sum of every Christian man's duty is to labour by all means towards that which other men seeing in us may justify; and what we ourselves must accuse, if we fall into it, that by all means we can to avoid; considering especially that as hitherto upon the Church there never yet fell tempestuous storm the vapours whereof were not first noted to rise from coldness in affection and from backwardness in duties of service towards God, so if that which the tears of antiquity have uttered concerning this point should be here set down, it were assuredly enough to soften and to mollify an heart of steel. On the contrary part, although we confess with St. Augustine most willingly, that the chiefest happiness for which we have some Christian kings in so great admiration above the rest is not because of their long reign, their calm and quiet departure out of this present life, the settled establishment of their own flesh and blood succeeding them in royalty and power, the glorious overthrow of foreign enemies, or the wise prevention of inward dangers and of secret attempts at home; all which solaces and comforts of this our unquiet life it pleaseth God oftentimes to bestow on them which have no society or part in the joys of heaven, giving thereby to understand that these in comparison are toys and trifles far under the value and price of that which is to be looked for at his hands; but in truth the reason wherefore we most extol their felicity is if so be they have virtuously reigned, if honour have not filled their hearts with pride, if the exercise of their power hath been service and attendance upon the Majesty of the Most High, if they have feared him as their own inferiors and subjects have feared

them, if they have loved neither pomp nor pleasure more than heaven, if revenge have slowly proceeded from them and mercy willingly offered itself, if so they have tempered rigour with lenity that neither extreme severity might utterly cut them off in whom there was manifest hope of amendment, nor yet the easiness of pardoning offences embolden offenders, if knowing that whatsoever they do their potency may bear it out they have been so much the more careful not to do anything but that which is commendable in the best rather than usual with greatest personages, if the true knowledge of themselves hath humbled them in God's sight no less than God in the eyes of men hath raised them up; I say albeit we reckon such to be the happiest of them that are mightiest in the world, and albeit those things alone are happiness, nevertheless considering what force there is even in outward blessings to comfort the minds of the best disposed, and to give them the greater joy when religion and peace, heavenly and earthly happiness are wreathed in one crown, as to the worthiest of Christian princes it hath by the providence of the Almighty hitherto befallen: let it not seem to any man a needless and superfluous waste of labour that there hath been thus much spoken to declare how in them especially it hath been so observed, and withal universally noted even from the highest to the very meanest, how this peculiar benefit, this singular grace and preeminence religion hath, that either it guardeth as an heavenly shield from all calamities, or else conducteth us safe through them, and permitteth them not to be miseries; it either giveth honours, promotions, and wealth, or else more benefit by wanting them than if we had them at will; it either filleth our houses with plenty of all good things, or maketh a salad of green herbs more sweet than all the sacrifices of the ungodly.—R. Hooker, *Eccl. Polity*, Book V. ch. lxxvi. § 8.

The writers of this and the next century have a certain crudeness, which makes them the more profitable as a subject of study. I mean that they exhibit very openly the efforts made to attain the art of writing prose, and by this means they display to us what it is that prose strives after, and so indicate what is the essential nature of prose. In none better than in Hooker and Bacon do we see and feel that prose is the instrument of reason as poetry is the instrument of imagination. In proportion as prose writing grows towards maturity, its mechanism becomes less exposed, and it approaches that art which conceals its processes, and, while it may be fitter

for a model to copy, it is not in every respect so serviceable as a specimen for the observation of elementary principles. The next example shall be from Bacon.

But the greatest Error of all the rest, is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or furthest end of knowledge: for men have entred into a desire of Learning and knowledge, sometimes vpon a naturall curiositie, and inquisitiue appetite; sometimes to entertaine their mindes with varietie and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to inable them to victorie of wit and contradiction, and most times for lukar and profession, and seldome sincerely to giue a true account of their guift of reason, to the benefite and vse of men: As if there were sought in knowledge a Cowch, wherevpon to rest a searching and restlesse spirit; or a tarrasse for a wandering and variable mind, to walke vp and downe with a faire prospect; or a Tower of State for a proude minde to raise it selfe vpon; or a Fort or commaunding ground for strife and contention, or a Shoppe for profite or sale; and not a rich store-house for the glorie of the Creator, and the reliefe of mans estate.—But this is that, which will indeed dignifie and exalt knowledge: if contemplation and action may be more neerely and straightly conioyned and vnited together, than they haue beene; a Conjunction like vnto that of the two highest Planets; Saturne the Planet of rest and contemplation: and Jupiter the Planet of civile societie and action. Howbeit, I doe not mean when I speake of vse and action, that end before mentioned of the applying of knowledge to luker and profession; For I am not ignorant how much that diuerteth and interrupteth the prosecution and advancement of knowledge; like unto the golden ball throwne before Atalanta, which while she goeth aside and stoopeth to take vp, the race is hindred.

Declinat cursus, aurumque volubile tollit.

The Twoo Bookes of Francis Bacon. Of the proficience and aduancement of Learning, diuine and humane. London, 1605. leaf 26.

Bacon's *Essays* were published in 1597, and of this book Hallam said, that it 'leads the van of our prose literature.' In saying this, he did but formulate the impression of educated men in his day, but that was before the upper course of the stream had been adequately explored. As English prose it is indeed a very remarkable book, especially as it lets us see through the now prevailing and rampant Classicism to some

select retreat where the true English tradition flourishes with its native vigour. This is a great service at this juncture of the history.

There is another important hint which we owe to Bacon. In him we see a claim advanced for English prose to take up a European position. Of his *Advancement of Learning* he spoke with a just consciousness of its value when he pronounced it 'a book that will live, and be a citizen of the world which English books are not.' It was not indeed the only English book of the day that had a natural claim to this title. If ever there was a writer who might challenge universal recognition, it was Hooker. But in Bacon we see the thought expressed, and it lifts us another stage in the history of English prose, to see that it now advances a pretension to take its place in European literature. This stage has been erroneously confused with the idea of the actual commencement of English prose literature, whereas it indicates a relative maturity. Authors who are possessed with this idea of the lateness of English prose have sometimes argued that Sir Thomas More and Bacon wrote some books in Latin because English prose was at that time in too undeveloped a state to satisfy the expression of their thoughts. This misinterpretation has been dealt with above, and here I will only repeat that the motive for writing in Latin was simply that their books might belong to the circle of European literature and not be confined to English readers. And this further explains the reason why this book (*Advancement of Learning*) is more Latin in style than the *Essay*. It was in this book that he made that division of learning into History, Poetry, and Philosophy, corresponding to the three faculties of Memory, Imagination, and Reason; of which it has been said by Dean Church that this division is 'one of the landmarks of what high thought and rich imagination have made of the English language.'

Before we have done with the Sixteenth century we must once more cast a glance at the relation of Prose to Poetry. At no moment in the whole course of this great history is it more incumbent on us so to do. Poetry, in its higher strains, had been unheard for well nigh two hundred years, from the

close of the Fourteenth to very hard upon the close of the Sixteenth century. It was a great Prose Era, and in this character it remains unsurpassed. Poetry had fallen into discredit and contempt, from which Sir Philip Sidney desired to restore it. Little thought he, when in 1581 he was writing *An Apologie for Poetrie*, that he stood so near to a manifestation of poetry greater than any he was able to appeal to in his review of the literature of the past. How low must the cause of Poetry have fallen when it needed pleading like that in the subjoined quotation, which is from the opening of his Apology.

1581.

When the right vertuous Edward VVotton, and I, were at the Emperor's Court together, wee gaue our selves to learne horsemanship of Iohn Pietro Pugliano; one that with great commendation had the place of an Esquire in his stable. And hee, according to the fertilnes of the Italian wit, did not only afoord us the demonstration of his practise, but sought to enrich our mindes with the contemplations therein, which hee thought most precious. But with none I remember mine eares were at any time more loden, than when (either angred with slowe paiment, or mooued with our learner-like admiration) he exercised his speech in the prayse of his facultie. Hee sayd, Souldiours were the noblest estate of mankinde, and horsemen, the noblest of Souldiours. Hee sayde, they were the Maisters of warre, and ornaments of peace: speedy goers, and strong abiders, triumphers both in Camps and Courts. Nay, to so vnbeleeued a poynt hee proceeded, as that no earthly thing bred such wonder to a Prince, as to be a good horseman. Skill of gouernment, was but a Pedanteria in comparison: then would hee adde certaine prayses, by telling what a peerlesse beast a horse was. The onely seruiceable Courtier without flattery, the beast of most beutie, faithfulness, courage, and such more, that if I had not beene a peece of a Logician before I came to him, I think he would haue perswaded mee to haue wished my selfe a horse. But thus much at least with his no fewe words hee draue into me, that selfe-loue is better then any guilding to make that seeme gorgious, wherein our selues are parties. VVherein, if Pugliano his strong affection and weake arguments will not satisfie you, I will give you a neerer example of my selfe, who (I knowe not by what mischance) in these my not old yeres and idelest times, hauing slipt into the title of a Poet, am prouoked to say somthing vnto you in the defence of that my vn-

elected vocation, which if I handle with more good will then good reasons, beare with me, sith the scholler is to be pardoned that foloweth the steppes of his Maister. And yet I must say, that as I have iust cause to make a pittiful defence of poore Poetry, which from almost the highest estimation of learning, is fallen to be the laughingstocke of children. So haue I need to bring some more auaileable proofes: sith the former is by no means barred of his deserued credite, the silly latter hath had euen the names of Philosophers vsed to the defacing of it, with great danger of ciuill war among the Muses. And first, truly to al them that professing learning inueigh against Poetry, may iustly be objected, that they goe uery neer to vngratfulnes, to seek to deface that, which in the noblest nations and languages that are knowne, hath been the first lightgiuer to ignorance, and first Nurse, whose milk by little and little enabled them to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges: and will they now play the Hedghog, that being receiued into the den, draue out his host? or rather the Vipers, that with theyr birth kill their Parents? Let learned Greece in any of her manifold Sciences, be able to shew me one booke, before Musæus, Homer, and Hesiodus, all three nothing els but Poets. Nay, let any historie be brought, that can say any VVriters were there before them, if they were not men of the same skill, as Orpheus, Linus, and some other are named: who hauing beene the first of that Country, that made pens deliuerers of their knowledge to their posterity, may iustly challenge to be called their Fathers in learning: for not only in time they had this priority (although in it self antiquity be venerable) but went before them, as causes to drawe with their charming sweetnes, the wild vntamed wits to an admiration of knowledge. So as Amphion was sayde to moue stones with his Poetrie, to build Thebes. And Orpheus to be listened to by beastes, indeed, stony and beastly people. So among the Romans were Liuius, Andronicus, and Ennius. So in the Italian language, the first that made it aspire to be a Treasure-house of Science, were the Poets Dante, Boccace, and Petrarch. So in our English were Gower and Chawcer.—*An Apologie for Poetrie*, init. (Arber's Reprint, 1868).

When we consider to how late a time Poetry had continued to be the popular vehicle of literature; how recently Prose had entered into competition with it, it will seem like a surprize to observe the low estate to which Poetry is now fallen. If we only consider the large remains of heroic poetry still extant in Anglo-Saxon; if we only think of the voluminous

poetical history of Britain by Layamon, of the great homiletic poem of Orm, of Robert of Gloucester's long Chronicle in verse, and then of the immense jungle of medieval romance, all in poetry, till such time as Sir Thomas Malory, in the second half of the fifteenth century, reduced the tales to a sort of connected prose; if we think of the popularity of a long-winded poet like Gower in the fourteenth century, besides the extensive poems of Langland and Chaucer (which, however, had new virtue to recommend them); if moreover we remember the lengthy poems of Lydgate and his contemporaries in the fifteenth century; we shall easily see that poetry held its own as the popular vehicle of literature down to the end of the fifteenth and even into the sixteenth century.

Although our Prose dates from the eighth century and even earlier, yet it is not until the sixteenth century that it begins to rival Poetry in the field of entertaining literature. But when a beginning was made, it seemed almost as if poetry was to be swamped by the tide of prose. The old vein of heroic poetry seemed to be quite worked out, and as human intelligence was awakened and quickened by a variety of causes, so prose was more and more appreciated, while poetry fell into neglect and even contempt. This is the age in which we first hear of 'An Apologie for Poetrie' and now for the first time we have critical essays on Poetry by Gascoigne, Webbe, and Puttenham. All these are signs of a new age: the Elizabethan poetry is a new departure, it is a revival indeed of poetry, but a revival in which poetry assumes a new character, as something distinct from prose, of higher lineage and greater pretensions; as having retired to her august retreat, and as having left the common field in possession of Prose.

The Seventeenth Century.

The first years of the Seventeenth century exhibit, for present purposes, rather a prolongation of the Sixteenth, than the opening of a new era. Whatever the date of particular texts, we take everything of Shakspeare and of Bacon to be, in essence, Elizabethan. And if this holds of these typical representatives of the genius of poetry and of prose, much

more conspicuously does it hold good of that work of translation which is the central piece of the whole development of the English Language. If we reckon from the time when Tyndale may be supposed to have begun his work, we may count the Bible of 1611 as the nation's travail of a hundred years. The following estimate is worthy of the writer's pedigree, and does honour to his high and scholarlike attainments.

In the first place, then, the dialect of this translation was not, at the time of the revision, or indeed at any other period, the actual current book-language, nor the colloquial speech of the English people. This is a point of much importance, because the contrary opinion has been almost universally taken for granted; and hence very mistaken views have been, and still are, entertained respecting the true relations of the diction of that version to the national tongue. It was an assemblage of the best forms of expression applicable to the communication of religious truth that then existed, or had existed in any and all the successive stages through which English had passed in its entire history. Fuller indeed informs us that, when a boy, he was told by a day-laborer of Northamptonshire, that the version in question agreed nearly with the dialect of his county; but, though it may have more closely resembled the language of that shire, and though it certainly most nearly approximated to the popular speech in those parts of the realm where English was best spoken, yet, when it appeared, it was by no means regarded as an embodiment of the everyday language of the time. . . .

The position of the revisers and their public was entirely different from that of Luther and the German people, when the great Reformer undertook the task of giving his countrymen the Bible in their own tongue; and, accordingly, very different principles were, properly, adopted by the German and the English translators. German bibles indeed existed before Luther, but they were too strongly marked with dialectic peculiarities—too incorrect . . . to serve as the foundation of a revision. . . . The aim of Luther was to give to the high and the low of the Teutonic race access to the authority on which he based his doctrines, in a form for the first time generally intelligible, and scrupulously faithful to the original text. He had before him no repository of a sacred, and yet universally understood, phraseology; and, as a teacher of the people, he could only make himself comprehended by using the dialect, which

was the familiar everyday speech of the largest portion of the people of his native land. Hence, as he says himself, he composed the phraseology he adopted, out of the living vocabulary, which he heard employed around him in the street, the market, the field, and the workshop; and formed a diction out of elements common to the speech of the whole Germanic race.'—George P. Marsh, *Lectures on the English Language*, New York, 1861; p. 621 ff.

So far we have been considering what is, for the present purpose, an outlying part of the Sixteenth century, a transitional frontier between two eras; we will now come to the proper characteristics of the Seventeenth century.

The Seventeenth century is an eventful time for English prose, because in it the classic style both culminated and also gave way before the restitution of native diction. The conspicuous note of the classic style was the long and comprehensive sentence. This is not peculiar to English; it was the ordinary and general product of the Renaissance in all the modern languages. Classical studies taught men to relish and to achieve prodigious sentences. The History of Guicciardini is a prolonged concatenation of such sentences, and the first sentence of all affords a pretty convincing example. Of the same cast were a large proportion of Milton's sentences. Here follows one of them, a sentence which was written in the early part of his life, and so belongs to the first half of the century.

Then, amidst the *Hymns*, and *Halleluiahs* of *Saints* some one may perhaps bee heard offering at high *strains* in new and lofty *Measures* to sing and celebrate thy *divine Mercies*, and *marvelous Judgements* in this Land throughout all AGES; whereby this great and Warlike Nation instructed and inur'd to the fervent and continuall practice of *Truth* and *Righteousnesse*, and casting farre from her the *rags* of her old *vices*, may presse on hard to that *high* and *happy* emulation to be found the *soberest*, wisest, and *most Christian People* at that day when thou the Eternall and shortly-expected King shalt open the Clouds to judge the severall Kingdomes of the World, and distributing *Nationall Honours* and *Rewards* to Religious and just *Commonwealths*, shalt put an end to all Earthly *Tyrannies*, proclaiming thy universal and milde Monarchy through Heaven and Earth. Where they undoubtedly that by their *Labours*, *Counsels*, and *Prayers*, have been earnest for the *Common good* of *Religion* and their Countrey, shall receive, above the inferiour *Orders* of the *Blessed*, the *Regall*

addition of *Principalities*, *Legions*, and *Thrones* into their glorious Titles, and in supereminence of *beatifick Vision*, progressing the *datelesse* and *irrevoluble* Circle of *Eternity* shall clasp inseparable Hands with *joy* and blisse in over-measure for ever. [4to edit. Lond. 1641, p. 89.]

In the second sentence of Milton's first pamphlet 'Of Reformation &c.' there are about four hundred words. The short sentence was already forcing itself upon the notice of the votaries of classicism, and Milton scorned the short sentence. He ridiculed the short sentences of Hall—'making sentences by the statute, as if all above three inches were confiscate.' And again he says—'instead of well-sized periods he greets us with a quantity of thumb-ring posies.'[1]

For a sustained outpouring of long sentences perhaps none surpassed Jeremy Taylor, of whom Hallam says—'his innumerable quotations, his multiplied reasonings, his prodigality of epithets and appositions, are poured along the interminable periods of his writings.' The stream of his volubility is so continuous, that it is hard to detach a good sentence for a sample; here, however, is a comparatively moderate one from *The Liberty of Prophesying*, Ch. 13:—

And if all men have no other efficacie or authority on the understanding but by perswasion, proposall and intreaty, then a man is bound to assent but according to the operation of the argument, and the energie of perswasion, neither indeed can he, though he would never so faine, and he that out of feare and too much complyance and desire to be safe, shall desire to bring his understanding with some luxation to the beliefe of humane dictates and authorities, may as often misse of the truth as hit it, but is sure alwaies to lose the comfort of truth, because he believes it upon indirect, insufficient, and incompetent arguments: and as his desire it should be so is his best argument that it is so, so the pleasing of men is his best reward, and his not being condemned and contradicted all the possession of a truth.—*The First Edition*, 1647; p. 202.

Perhaps we might reasonably select Cowley's prose as the field in which the two movements are earliest and most visibly reconciled. In that most sweet writer, the long sen-

[1] *Apology for Smectymnuus;* in vol. iii. of Bohn's edition of the Prose Works of Milton (1848); pp. 99, 135.

tence is found to be compatible with simplicity of diction. There is no appearance of reaction; it is the work, not of a rebellious, but of a selective and harmonizing mind. The following is from the Essay 'Of Agriculture.'

There is no other sort of life that affords so many branches of praise to a panegyrist: The utility of it to a man's self; the usefulness, or, rather, necessity of it to all the rest of mankind; the innocence, the pleasure, the antiquity, the dignity. The utility (I mean plainly the lucre of it) is not so great now in our nation as arises from merchandise and the trading of the city, from whence many of the best estates and chief honours of the kingdom are derived; we have no men now fetched from the plough to be made lords, as they were in Rome to be made consuls & dictators, the reason of which I conceive to be from an evil custom now grown as strong among us as if it were a law, which is, that no men put their children to be bred up apprentices in agriculture, as in other trades, but such who are poor, that when they come to be men they have not wherewithal to set up in it, and so can only farm some small parcel of ground, the rent of which devours all but the bare subsistence of the tenant; whilst they who are proprietors of the land are either too proud or, for want of that kind of education, too ignorant to improve their estates, though the means of doing it be as easy and certain in this as in any other track of commerce.—*Essays* by Abraham Cowley; 'Of Agriculture.'

1664.

With Cowley we may, for simplicity and directness, couple the manner of Izaak Walton.

But, notwithstanding this averseness, he was at last persuaded to accept of the bishop's proposal, and was by patent for life made master of the Temple the 17th of March, 1585, he being then in the 34th year of his age.

And here I shall make a stop; and, that the reader may the better judge of what follows, give him a character of the times, and temper of the people of this nation, when Mr. Hooker had his admission into this place; a place which he accepted, rather than desired: and yet here he promised himself a virtuous quietness, that blessed tranquillity which he always prayed and laboured for, that so he might in peace bring forth the fruits of peace, and glorify God by uninterrupted prayers and praises. For this he always thirsted & prayed: but Almighty God did not grant it; for his

admission into this place was the very beginning of those oppositions & anxieties, which till then this good man was a stranger to; and of which the reader may guess by what follows.

In this character of the times I shall, by the reader's favour, and for his information, look so far back as to the beginning of the reign of queen Elizabeth; a time, in which the many pretended titles to the crown, the frequent treasons, the doubts of her successor, the late civil war, and the sharp persecution for religion that raged to the effusion of so much blood in the reign of queen Mary, were fresh in the memory of all men; and begot fears in the most pious and wisest of this nation, lest the like days should return again to them, or their present posterity. And the apprehension of these dangers begot a hearty desire of a settlement in the church and state; believing there was no other probable way left to make them sit quietly under their own vines and fig-trees, & enjoy the desired fruit of their labours. But time, and peace, and plenty, begot self-ends; and these begot animosities, envy, opposition, and unthankfulness for those very blessings for which they lately thirsted, being then the very utmost of their desires, and even beyond their hopes.

This was the temper of the times in the beginning of her reign; and thus it continued too long; for those very people that had enjoyed the desires of their hearts in a reformation from the church of Rome, became at last so like the grave, as never to be satisfied, but were still thirsting for more and more; neglecting to pay that obedience, and perform those vows, which they made in their days of adversities and fear: so that in a short time there appeared three several interests, each of them fearless and restless in the prosecution of their designs: they may for distinction be called, the 'active Romanists,' the 'restless nonconformists,' (of which there were many sorts,) and the 'passive peaceable protestant.' The counsels of the first considered and resolved on in Rome: the second both in Scotland, in Geneva, and in divers selected, secret, dangerous conventicles, both there and within the bosom of our own nation: the third pleaded and defended their cause by established laws, both ecclesiastical and civil: and if they were active, it was to prevent the other two from destroying what was by those known laws happily established to them and their posterity.—Izaak Walton, *The Life of Mr. Richard Hooker.*

The excess of the classic passion shewed itself in some fastidious and ingenious writers by an attempt to reproduce that *curiosa felicitas* which we admire in certain Latin writers

both of prose and verse, such as Sallust, Virgil, Tacitus; but which our barbarian speech never took kindly to. An excessive elaboration of diction produced in this century what is called Quaintness, as in the former century it had produced Euphuism. The following from Feltham's *Resolves* (1631) may serve to give a notion;—'when the guard of circumspection is over, we lie spread to the shot of general danger . . . to convert discontentment into a dimpling joy . . . knowing our weakness we must sinew it with a stronger nerve.'

The Quaintness of the seventeenth century is commonly linked with the name of Thomas Fuller, not because he is the most glaring example, but rather because he is one of the few high class writers in whom this quality is conspicuous. For in fact, although quaintness is best known to the modern reader through his writings, yet he does not afford a true example of the fault of quaintness. His quaintness is a sort, a droll sort perhaps, of beauty; because the language is a true vesture to the thought, and Fuller is quaint in his very thought. The quaintness which is blameable rises when a writer is more curious about his diction than careful to have something to say before he covers paper with decorated words. The Quaintness of the Seventeenth century is a phenomenon of the same nature as the Euphuism of the Sixteenth. It is like the secular return of an epidemic enthusiasm.

I will not seek any exaggerated example, but rather give a short piece in which the tinge of quaintness may be the better appreciated because of the pervading moderation of tone.

John Flavel, 1627–1691.

On the sudden withering of a Rose.—Being with my friend in a garden, we gathered each of us a rose. He handled his tenderly, smelled to it but seldom and sparingly. I always kept mine to my nose, or squeezed it in my hand, whereby in a very short time it lost both its color & sweetness, but his still remained as sweet & fragrant as if it had been growing upon its own root. These roses, said I, are the true emblems of the best & sweetest creature enjoyments in the world, which being moderately and cautiously used & enjoyed, may for a long time yield sweetness to the possessor of them; but if once the affections seize too greedily upon them and squeeze them too hard, they quickly wither in our hands, and we

lose the comfort of them; and that either through the soul's surfeiting upon them, or the Lord's righteous & just removal of them because of the excess of our affections to them. It is a point of excellent wisdom to keep the golden bridle of moderation upon all the affections we exercise on earthly things; and never to let slip the reins of the affections, unless when they move towards God, in the love of whom there is no danger of excess.—*Occasional Meditations.*

It was necessary to cast a glimpse at Quaintness, not so much for its own sake, as because it probably tended even more than the classic dignity of Clarendon and the long sentences of Milton, to prick on the reaction. The field of the reaction was the Newspaper, which during this century struggled into life and became a national institution. It was the forced rapidity of ephemeral writing that accelerated the reaction, which, if it had merely depended upon the slow growth of a better taste, would not have been consummated as it was in this seventeenth century.

The publicist movement, which for an instant disfigured the language with slovenliness, was ultimately fruitful in the most beneficial results. It was the increasing speed of current literature that delivered us both from turgidity and from quaintness, and brought in the straightforward simplicity of style which on the whole characterizes modern English prose. A conspicuous agent in this great improvement was Daniel Defoe. The style of *Robinson Crusoe* is free, open, unconscious, direct; in short, it is one of the nearest approaches to perfection.

Sir Roger L'Estrange (1616–1704), pamphleteer and journalist, stands out as the first representative name in the annals of journalism. Having run risks and suffered imprisonment in the royal cause, he was at the Restoration appointed licenser of the press. As a writer he labours under the imputation of having contributed to the degradation of his mother tongue. This charge has been so commonly brought against journalists, that it would hardly be noticeable, were it not that L'Estrange has been selected for something of a special stigma as if he had been a wanton corruptor of English. This is not accidental, nor is the cause obscure. He came

forward in a moment of great reaction, and his long and popular authorship naturally rendered him a typical figure. The grandiose diction of classicism, which had culminated in Clarendon and Milton, was obviously unfit for the off-hand usage that was now required by journalism. For the chief instigation to journalism was to inform, indoctrinate, and propitiate the body of the people. It was a new departure; a wider class was to be addressed. A certain colloquial freedom, not to say a certain rudeness and roughness, was here appropriate. Moreover it must be remembered that the writing was to be achieved under new conditions. Not in the leisure of the well-stocked library, but anywhere and as he could, the pamphleteer and journalist must write. This latter consideration is highly significant at this juncture. For this it was that favoured the return of natural diction, the revival of the original old English Prose, of which we have only seen here and there a surviving waif since the fifteenth century. Now once more emerges this long suppressed and homely style, and if its first appearance is rather rude and coarse, the circumstances adequately account for it. The restitution of English which was thus begun has gone on progressively from that time to this. Some touch of classicism may have been recalled now and then into our modern literature, but nevertheless the true parentage of all that is most firm and valuable in the present English Prose must be derived from the new style (rather the old revived) that came forward after the Restoration; and the flagbearers of it are first of all the journalists L'Estrange and Defoe, and then the allegorist Bunyan and the poet Dryden. One thing this new movement has effected which cannot too highly be prized. It has kept the diction of the highest culture in touch with the speech of the people, and has made the English language one for all sorts and conditions of men. The divorce between the speech of the upper and lower classes which was the rule in the ancient world, which exists in some measure among the Germans of the present day, and which threatened English in the first half of the seventeenth century, has been effectually warded off.

The pamphlets of L'Estrange are not of a character likely

to be reprinted, and therefore they are harder to come at than books of more intrinsic worth. Having been favoured with the use of several of them by the kindness of a neighbour,[1] I take the opportunity of presenting the reader with three specimens.

Presbyterian Improvements, are Commonly a little Senister; (or as a man may say, over the left Shoulder) They have a way to themselves, of making a Glorious King, and a Happy People. But we shall not dispute the Possibility of doing many things which may be yet of dangerous Experiment. I do belive it possible for a man to flye; yet set him upon Pauls, and Lure him down, upon the Tryal, 'tis at least Six to Four he breaks his Neck. Truly in my Opinion this Proposal is all out as Impracticable. But 'tis all one to Me. What if the Two Church-Parties can Agree, or what if they cannot. My business is to keep the Presbyterian from laying Violent hands upon the Civil Power, and to convince a Party so denominated, of Sedition, not of Schism.—*The Holy Cheat*, p. 49.

Some Grumblings toward the Consistorian Discipline, there were in the days of Edward the Sixth: But the first notorious Separation, was that of Frankford (in the Reign of Queen Mary) when Gilby, Goodman, and Whittingham, with their Companions, flew off, and went to Geneva; from whence they returned into England, soon after Queen Elizabeth came to the Crown. These led the Dance in England; Knox in Scotland, and at this day our Presbyterians do but write after their Copy; professing the same Principles, pretending the same Scruples, and beyond doubt, proposing the same End; which was to get the same Dominion here which Calvin and Beza exercised at Geneva: to whom they still repair'd for Counsel, as they needed.

Cartwright and Travers came in the Breech of those, but not without consulting Beza first, to learn the Knack of the Geneva-Model. These were the men, that first brought into England that horrible Position, that the Geneva-Discipline was as essential a Note of the Church, as either the true Preaching of the Word, or the due Administration of the Sacraments. This is the Principle which supports the Presbyterian Interest.—*The Holy Cheat*, p. 63.

But we must not forget the Solemn Investiture of the Protector, by Authority of Parliament; (forsooth) and yet we must not make the Bauble proud neither, by saying too much on't.

[1] C. H. Firth, Esq., of Balliol College, to whose valuable collection of English books I have by his great liberality been repeatedly indebted.

The Foolery was perform'd in Westminster Hall, where his Highness was presented with a Coat; to wit, A Robe of Purple-Velvet, lin'd with Ermins; A Bible, Gilt and Bossed; a Sword: And lastly, a Sceptre of Massie Gold. When he was Girt and Vested, he lift up his Eyes to Heaven, and took an Oath, (not the First he had broken by many a Thousand) which being dispatch'd, Mr. Manton Consecrated the Independent Foppery, with a Presbyterian Blessing; after which his Highness being Publish'd and Proclaim'd, the Comedy concluded.—*A Memento*, p. 27.

We cannot omit a specimen of the prose of John Tillotson, archbishop of Canterbury; not only because he was the most admired preacher of his day, but because he was named by Dryden as his pattern. The extract shall be taken from his famous sermon against Evil-Speaking, which was preached in 1692 at Whitehall before William and Mary; a sermon which the queen is said to have prized very highly.

Another *cause* of Evil speaking is *Envy*. Men look with an evil Eye upon the Good that is in others, and think that their Reputation obscures *them*, and that their commendable Qualities do stand in *their* Light; and therefore they do what they can to cast a Cloud over them, that the bright shining of their Virtues may not scorch *them*. This makes them greedily to entertain, and industriously to publish anything that may serve to that purpose, thereby to raise themselves upon the Ruins of other Men's Reputation: And, therefore, as soon as they have got an ill-Report of any good Man by the End, to work they presently go to send it abroad by the first *Post*: For the String is always ready upon their Bow to let fly this Arrow with an incredible Swiftness, thro' *City* and *Country*, for Fear the innocent Man's Justification should overtake it.

Another *Cause* of Evil speaking is *Impertinence* and *Curiosity*, an itch of talking and meddling in the Affairs of other Men, which do no wise concern them. Some Persons love to mingle themselves in all Business, and are loth to seem ignorant of so important a piece of *News* as the *Faults* and *Follies* of Men, or any bad thing that is talked of in good Company. And therefore they do with great care pick up ill Stories, as good matter of Discourse in the next Company that is worthy of them: And this perhaps not out of any great Malice, but for want of something better to talk of, and because their Parts lie chiefly that way.

Men do this many times out of *Wantonness* and for *Diversion*. So little do light and vain Men consider, that a Man's Reputation is

too great and tender a Concernment to be jested withal; and that a sland'rous Tongue *bites like a Serpent, and wounds like a Sword.* For what can be more barbarous, next to sporting with a Man's life, than to play with his Honour and Reputation, which to some Men is dearer to them than their lives? It is a cruel Pleasure which some Men take in worrying the Reputation of others much better than themselves, and this only to divert themselves and the Company . . . . It is certainly a great *Injury*, and if the Evil which we say of them be not true, it is an Injury beyond Imagination, and beyond all possible Reparation. And tho' we should do our utmost Endeavour afterwards towards their Vindication, yet that makes but very little amends; because the Vindication seldom reacheth so far as the Reproach, and because commonly Men are neither so forward to spread the Vindication, nor is it so easily received after ill Impressions are once made. The solicitous Vindication of a Man's self is, at the best, but an *after-game;* and for the most part a Man had better sit still, than to run the hazard of making the Matter worse by *playing* it.

It was under Dryden's pen that the prose of the Seventeenth century attained its highest power and compass. Here is a specimen.

It was that memorable day, in the first summer of the late war, when our navy engaged the Dutch; a day wherein the two most mighty and best appointed fleets which any age had ever seen, disputed the command of the greater half of the globe, the commerce of nations, and the riches of the universe: while these vast floating bodies, on either side, moved against each other in parallel lines, and our countrymen, under the happy command of his Royal Highness, went breaking, by little and little, into the line of the enemies; the noise of the cannon from both navies reached our ears about the city; so that all men being alarmed with it, and in a dreadful suspense of the event, which they knew was then deciding, every one went following the sound as his fancy led him; and leaving the town almost empty, some took towards the Park, some cross the river, others down it; all seeking the noise in the depth of silence.

Amongst the rest, it was the fortune of Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius, and Neander, to be in company together; three of them persons whom their wit and quality have made known to all the town; and whom I have chosen to hide under these borrowed names, that they may not suffer by so ill a relation as I am going to make of their discourse.

Taking then a barge, which a servant of Lisideius had provided for them, they made haste to shoot the bridge, and left behind them that great fall of waters which hindered them from having what they desired; after which, having disengaged themselves from many vessels which rode at anchor in the Thames, and almost blocked up the passage towards Greenwich, they ordered the watermen to let fall their oars more gently; and then every one favouring his own curiosity with a strict silence, it was not long ere they perceived the air to break about them like the noise of distant thunder, or of swallows in a chimney; those little undulations of sound, though almost vanishing before they reached them, yet still seeming to retain somewhat of their first horror which they had betwixt the fleets. After they had attentively listened till such time as the sound by little and little went from them, Eugenius, lifting up his head, and taking notice of it, was the first who congratulated to the rest that happy omen of our nation's victory: adding, that we had but this to desire in confirmation of it, that we might hear no more of that noise which was now leaving the English coast. When the rest had concurred in the same opinion, Crites, a person of a sharp judgment, and somewhat too delicate a taste in wit, which the world hath mistaken in him for ill-nature, said, smiling to us, that if the concernment of this battle had not been so exceeding great, he could scarce have wished the victory at the price he knew he must pay for it, in being subject to the reading and hearing of so many ill verses as he was sure would be made on that subject.—John Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, init.

Dr. Johnson in his *Life of Pope* instituted a comparison between Dryden and Pope chiefly as to their Poetry; what he said about their prose may come in here, though out of chronological course.

'Poetry was not the sole praise of either; for both excelled likewise in prose; but Pope did not borrow his prose from his predecessor. The style of Dryden is capricious & varied; that of Pope is cautious and uniform. Dryden observes the motions of his own mind; Pope constrains his mind to his own rules of composition. Dryden is sometimes vehement & rapid; Pope is always smooth, uniform & gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field rising into inequalities, & diversified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, & leveled by the roller.'

The account which I have given of the development of modern English prose differs in one important particular from that given by Mr. M. Arnold. In one important particular, I say, but not in the most important. I agree with him in tracing the appearance of modern English prose to the seventeenth century, and especially to the time after the Restoration. But while he regards it as a first appearance, I regard it as a re-appearance. He seems unconscious of any difficulty about the rapidity and ease with which it reached maturity, although he has himself noted the error of thinking 'as if a simple and natural prose were a thing which we might expect to come easy to communities of men.' This difficulty does does not trouble him here, because he has the pattern of the French prose to fill the gap. No doubt the French example gave its countenance and encouragement to the modern style and enabled it the sooner to prevail; but as an account of its production it is quite inadequate. It certainly is not the true cause; and I venture to hope that the historical proofs given in these chapters will suffice to remove any doubt upon this point. The piece of Mr. M. Arnold's writings to which I am here referring is his Preface to *Six Chief Lives*, from Johnson's Lives of the Poets. This Preface is partly an Essay on English prose, and it is one that cannot be too heartily recommended. It is instinct with true light and feeling for the subject. My determination of the epoch of modern English prose is the same as his, and our conclusions are quite independent of one another. I rejoice to be in harmony with him on this essential point. The difference is only about the previous tradition of English prose, and it is entirely due to that unconsciousness of the importance of our early literature which he shared with many highly educated men who have reared the fabric of their learning upon a basis chiefly classical and foreign.

A note of the diction of this time, reaching also pretty well through the following century, is the use of the preterite of strong verbs as a participle. It is not easy to conceive how so violent a grammatical aberration obtained currency. In order to explain it I find it necessary to muster all the causes of negligence which the age presents. A certain dis-

regard of English accuracy sprang from two contrary causes, both of which were prolific. On the one hand there was the classic school, which cared for English only as it could be made a reflection of Latin. On the other was the school of the genuine and native English, which relied little upon literary models, and drew chiefly from the colloquial source. It must have been in easy and familiar talk that this confusion originated, which from opposite causes was admitted by writers of both schools. It stands as the long-abiding note of a period of violent literary transition. It is a confusion which we are now happily rid of. In the following quotation *strove*.

> Slander thence hath always been a principal engine, whereby covetous, ambitious, envious, ill-natured, and vain persons have strove to supplant their competitors, and advance themselves; meaning thereby to procure, what they chiefly prize and like, wealth or dignity, or reputation, favour and power in the court, respect and interest with the people.—Isaac Barrow, *The Folly of Slander*.

The Seventeenth century is the battle-ground of the elements which constitute our present system. Nowhere are political movements so observably reflected in speech and literature. The first thing to observe is that the dominant sentiment was a scholastic one, and that this resulted in two distinct forms of cultured and æsthetic diction, which may roundly be characterized as the classic style of the Cavalier, and the quaintly figured style of the Puritan. Both of these were cultured styles; and widely as they differed, they were rooted in one and the same æsthetic principle. But in the last quarter of the century came a strong reaction, which was addressed not more to the one than to the other of these dominant and already typical forms of diction. The new mode was studiously negligent and incult;—prided itself upon a wanton affectation of slovenliness, and upon this basis a type of prose was set up. This has been mentioned above, and we shall have to return to it again. Such was the movement that raised a war of declared barbarism against the two established modes of the century, to break them down and to prepare the way for the compromise of the next century, and the balanced proprieties of the age of Queen Anne.

The Eighteenth Century.

The Eighteenth century is emphatically *the* century of English Prose. This is its characteristic. So much is prose in possession of the time, that it invades the poetry and governs it. The qualities which we admire in Pope's poetry (excepting some few pieces of his) are the admirable qualities of prose. This absorption of Poetry and Prose is a new phenomenon which first manifests itself in the works of Dryden and is carried to its full development by Pope. Dryden inaugurated an era which lasted down to the revival of poetry by Cowper, Burns, and the Lake Poets. During this interval Poetry was simply annexed by Prose. It was as if there was not room for both at the same time; as if for two such achievements as Poetry and Prose to be carried on simultaneously, each in its several perfection, were too much for the energies even of a mighty nation. To the contemporary eye the fact was disguised by the glitter of poetic form, by the rhythm and music and high perfection of the verse, besides the epigrammatic art of Dryden and still more of Pope.

(Our own century has witnessed to the progressive domination of Prose by a new and remarkable sort of testimony. A doubt has been started as to whether the elder kind of writing is destined to retain a permanent place in the literature of the future. Carlyle did not hesitate to class poetry with such barbarian gauds as nose-jewels and other whimsical ornaments which are doomed to become extinct. Conington was not without apprehensions on the subject. M. Edmond Scherer is very explicit, and has in his *L'Avenir de la Poésie* demonstrated the necessity of this event, from the nature of the human faculties and the order of their evolution. Mr. M. Arnold was in the opposite extreme. While he thought or affected to think, that religion would die out, he suggested that when this had come to pass, the one remaining solace for the human soul would be Poetry, which is inextinguishable.

I suppose that both forms of literature will always co-exist, that there is and will always be a proper field and province for poetry; that there are human sentiments which will find utterance in it, and which could not find due expression with-

out it; and that the doubt which has been started is nothing more than an incidental part of the agitation which takes place when two great rival agencies have to ascertain and adjust their relative position towards one another.)

The perverse affectation of using a degraded diction still went on and lasted beyond the first decade of the eighteenth century, as is very effectively testified by the *Tatler* for September 28, 1710. The same Number affords some interesting historical data, and I will take some extracts from it. The purport is that of a letter to Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., complaining of 'the continual corruption of our English tongue . . . by the false Refinements of twenty years past.' The correspondent has enclosed a specimen which he thus introduces:—

But instead of giving you a list of the late Refinements crept into our Language, I here send you the Copy of a Letter I received some time ago from a most accomplished person in this way of writing; upon which I shall make some remarks. It is in these Terms:

Sir,—I cou'dn't get the things you sent for all about Town—I thôt to ha come down myself, and then I'd ha' brôut 'um; but I han't don't, and I believe I can't do't, that's Pozz—Tom begins to gi'mself airs, because he's going with the Plenipo's.—'Tis said the French king will bamboozl' us agen, which causes many speculations. The Jacks and others of that kidney are very uppish and alert upon't, as you may see by their Phizz's—Will Hazard has got the Hipps, having lost to the Tune of five hundr'd pound thô he understands play very well, no body better. He has promis't me upon Rep, to leave off play; but you know 'tis a weakness he's too apt to give into, thô he has as much wit as any man, no body more. He has lain incog ever since.—The Mobb's very quiet with us now—I believe you thôt I banter'd you in my last, like a Country Put—I sha'n't leave town this month,' &c.

This letter is in every point an admirable pattern of the present polite way of writing; nor is it of less authority for being an epistle. You may gather every flower in it, with a thousand more of equal sweetness, from the books, pamphlets, and single papers offered us every day in the coffee-houses: and these are the beauties introduced to supply the want of wit, sense, humour, and learning, which formerly were looked upon as qualifications for a writer. . . .

These are the false refinements in our style which you ought to correct: first, by argument and fair means; but if those fail, I think you are to make use of your authority as Censor, and by an annual Index Expurgatorius, expunge all words and phrases that are offensive to good sense, and condemn these barbarous mutilations of vowels and syllables. In this last point, the usual pretence is that they spell as they speak. A noble standard for language! to depend upon the caprice of every coxcomb, who, because words are the clothing of our thoughts, cuts them out and shapes them as he pleases, and changes them oftener than his dress. I believe all reasonable people would be content that such refiners were more sparing in their words, and liberal in their syllables; and upon this head I should be glad you would bestow some advice upon several young readers in our Churches, who, coming up from the university full fraught with admiration of our town politeness, will needs correct the style of their prayer-books. In reading the Absolution they are very careful to say Pardons and Absolves; and in the prayer for the Royal Family, it must be endue 'um, enrich 'um, prosper 'um, and bring 'um. Then in their sermons they use all the modern terms of art, Shun, Banter, Mob, Bubble, Bully, Cutting, Shuffling, and Palming; all which and many more of the like stamp, as I have heard them often in the pulpit, from such young sophisters, so I have read them in some of *those sermons that have made most noise of late.* The design, it seems, is to avoid the dreadful imputation of pedantry; to show us that they know the town, understand men and manners, and have not been poring upon old unfashionable books in the university.

I should be glad to see you the instrument of introducing into our style that simplicity which is the best and truest ornament of most things in life, which the politer ages always aimed at in their buildings and dress (*simplex munditiis*), as well as their productions of wit. It is manifest that all new affected modes of speech, whether borrowed from the court, the town, or the theatre, are the first perishing parts in any language; and as I could prove by many hundred instances, have been so in ours. The writings of Hooker, who was a country clergyman, and of Parsons the Jesuit, both in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are in a style that with very few allowances, would not offend any present reader, and are much more clear and intelligible than those of Sir Harry Wotton, Sir Robert Naunton, Osborn, Daniel the historian, and several others who writ later; but being men of the Court, and affecting the phrases then in fashion, they are often either not to be understood, or appear perfectly ridiculous.

This affectation died out, and it does not constitute one of the main factors in the movement of the eighteenth century; —rather it is to be regarded as a survival of the agitations of the seventeenth.

The awakening interest in the details of prose is characteristic of the time, and it indicates an epoch of maturity. Not much more than half a year after the date of the above, the *Spectator* had a critique (by Steele) on *who*, *which*, and *that*; and it exhibits in a strong light the ignorance of the critic in the history of his mother tongue. I refer, of course, to the preposterous idea, that of these three Relatives, the one to be stigmatized as an upstart should be *that*!—We may notice by the way that the claim for *who* to stand in the Lord's Prayer, has been admitted by the American Church in their Revision of the Book of Common Prayer.

May 30, 1711.

To Mr. SPECTATOR.

The Humble Petition of WHO and WHICH,

Sheweth,

THAT your Petitioners being in a forlorn and destitute Condition, know not to whom we should apply our selves for Relief, because there is hardly any Man alive who hath not injured us. Nay we speak it with Sorrow, even YOU your self, whom we should suspect of such a Practice the last of all Mankind, can hardly acquit your self of having given us some Cause of Complaint. We are descended of ancient Families, and kept up our Dignity and Honour many Years, till the Jack-sprat THAT supplanted us. How often have we found our selves slighted by the Clergy in their Pulpits, and the Lawyers at the Bar? Nay, how often have we heard in one of the most polite and august Assemblies in the Universe, to our great Mortification, these Words, *That* THAT *that Noble L—d urged*; which if one of us had had Justice done would have sounded nobler thus, *That* WHICH *that noble L—d urged.* Senates themselves, the Guardians of British Liberty, have degraded us, and preferred THAT to us; and yet no Decree was ever given against us. In the very Acts of Parliament, in which the utmost Right should be done to every Body, WORD, and thing, we find our selves often either not used, or used one instead of another. In the first and best Prayer Children are taught, they learn to misuse us: *Our Father* WHICH

art in Heaven, should be, *Our Father* WHO *art in Heaven*; and even a CONVOCATION, after long Debates, refused to consent to an Alteration of it. In our General Confession we say,—*Spare Thou them, O God*, WHICH *confess their Faults*, which ought to be, WHO *confess their faults*. What Hopes then have we of having Justice done us, when the Makers of our very Prayers and Laws, and the most learned in all Faculties, seem to be in a Confederacy against us, and our Enemies themselves must be our Judges.

Now that we have touched upon the nascent spirit of enquiry about the mother tongue, and the lack of knowledge for conducting such an enquiry, we may quote a criticism from the latter half of the century by Bishop Hurd, a criticism which is remarkable as bringing in classical notions to solve the problems of English idiom. I by no means intend to deny that there is an element of truth in this scholarlike explanation. Hurd edited Addison's *Essays* with extreme care, he was a constant champion of his style as against Johnson's, and he is the first source of the attribution to Addison of the structure which closes the sentence with the verbal particle. The phrase in the *Spectator* which evoked the following comment was this—'which the prophet took a distinct view of.'

This way of throwing the preposition to the end of the sentence, is among the peculiarities of Mr. Addison's manner, and was derived from his nice ear. The secret deserves to be explained. The English tongue is naturally grave and majestic. The *rhythm* corresponds to the genius of it, and runs almost whether we will or no, into iambics. But the continuity of this solemn measure has an ill effect, where the subject is not of moment. Mr. Addison's delicate ear made him sensible of this defect in the rhythm of our language, and suggested to him the proper cure for it, which was to break the continued iambic measure, especially at the end of a sentence where the weight of it would be most felt, by a preposition or other short word, of no emphasis in the sense, and without accent, thrown into that part; whence a trochee being introduced into the place of an iambus, would give that air of negligence, and what the French call *légèreté*, which in a work of gaiety or elegance is found so taking. For instance, had the author said,—'of which the prōphet tōōk a distinct viēw'; the metre had been wholly iambic, or, what is worse, would have been loaded with a spondee in the last foot, and the accent must have fallen

with solemnity on the word *view*. . . . In the formal style, it is evident, this liberty should be sparingly used, but in conversation, in letters, in narrative, and universally in all the lighter forms of composition, the *Addisonian termination*, as we may call it, has an extreme grace. (Addison's Works, vol. iii.)

In the latter part of the eighteenth century a great controversy revolved around Dr. Johnson's prose diction. Macaulay says:—

The style was the subject of much eager controversy. Many readers pronounced the writer a pompous pedant, who would never use a word of two syllables where it was possible to use a word of six, and who could not make a waiting woman relate her adventures without balancing every noun with another noun, and every epithet with another epithet. Another party, not less zealous, cited with delight numerous passages in which weighty meaning was expressed with accuracy and illustrated with splendour. And both the censure and the praise were merited.[1]

Admirers and imitators carried it to an extreme which justified the exaggerations of caricature with which it was encountered. The opposition sometimes took the form of asserting the merits of Addison as against those of Johnson. The admiration of Addison appears at its acme in the refined and fastidious critic Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester. He deliberately preferred Addison to Shakspeare. Thus he wrote in 1770 at the mature age of fifty:—

I have found an amusement lately in turning over the works of Mr. Addison. I set out many years ago with a warm admiration of this amiable writer. I then took a surfeit of his natural easy manner, and was taken (like my betters) with the rapturous and high flights of Shakespeare. My maturer judgment, or lenient age (call it which you will) has now led me back to the favorite of my youth. And here I think I shall stick; for such useful sense in so charming words I find not elsewhere. 'His taste is so pure, and his Virgilian prose (as Dr. Young calls it) so exquisite, that I have but now found out, at the close of a critical life, the full value of his writings.—*Memoirs of Bp. Hurd*, by the Rev. F. Kilvert, 1860, p. 363.

[1] Biography of Johnson in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; republished in his *Miscellaneous Writings*, ed 1871, p. 383.

But he lived to see another style prevail over his chosen model, and he expressed his repugnance in hearty terms.

Simplicity in writing, practised by the best writers ancient and modern, has been growing out of fashion in England (I write this in 1800) for some time. The pompous, or what may be called the *swaggering* manner, was introduced by Bolingbroke; continued or rather heightened by Junius and Johnson; till now it is become the only style that pleases the mob of readers, and aspires to be taken notice of in reviews and magazines.—*Ibid.* p. 296.

For samples of Johnson's prose, we will take the passages in which he eulogizes his predecessors, Dryden and Addison.

Criticism, either didactick or defensive, occupies almost all his prose, except those pages which he has devoted to his patrons; but none of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other. The clauses are never balanced, nor the periods modelled: every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid: the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous; what is little, is gay; what is great, is splendid. He may be thought to mention himself too frequently; but while he forces himself upon our esteem, we cannot refuse him to stand high in his own. Every thing is excused by the play of images, and the sprightliness of expression. Though all is easy, nothing is feeble; though all seems careless, there is nothing harsh; and though, since his earlier works more than a century has passed, they have nothing yet uncouth or obsolete.

He who writes much will not easily escape a manner, such a recurrence of particular modes as may easily be noted. Dryden is always *another and the same*; he does not exhibit a second time the same elegances in the same form, nor appears to have any art other than that of expressing with clearness what he thinks with vigour. His style could not easily be imitated, either seriously or ludicrously; for, being always equable and always varied, it has no prominent or discriminative characters. The beauty who is totally free from disproportion of parts and features cannot be ridiculed by an overcharged resemblance.—*The Lives of the English Poets*; 'Dryden.'

As a describer of life and manners, he must be allowed to stand perhaps the first of the first rank. His humour, which, as Steele observes, is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused as to give the grace of novelty to domestic scenes and daily occurrences. He never 'outsteps the modesty of nature,' nor raises merriment or

wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by distortion, nor amaze by aggravation. He copies life with so much fidelity, that he can be hardly said to invent; yet his exhibitions have an air so much original, that it is difficult to suppose them not merely the product of imagination.

As a teacher of wisdom, he may be confidently followed. His religion has nothing in it enthusiastic or superstitious: he appears neither weakly credulous, nor wantonly sceptical; his morality is neither dangerously lax, nor impracticably rigid. All the enchantment of fancy, and all the cogency of argument are employed to recommend to the reader his real interest, the care of pleasing the Author of his being. Truth is shewn sometimes as the phantom of a vision; sometimes appears half-veiled in an allegory; sometimes attracts regard in the robes of fancy; and sometimes steps forth in the confidence of reason. She wears a thousand dresses, and in all is pleasing,

Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.

His prose is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not groveling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always easy, without glowing words, or pointed sentences. Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace; he seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendour.

It was apparently his principal endeavour to avoid all harshness and severity of diction; he is therefore sometimes verbose in his transitions and connections, and sometimes descends too much to the language of conversation; yet if his language had been less idiomatical, it might have lost somewhat of its genuine Anglicism. What he attempted, he performed; he is never feeble, and he did not wish to be energetick; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.—*The Lives of the English Poets*; 'Addison.'

The difference of manner in different parts of Johnson's writings is notorious; and it is satisfactorily explained by differences either in the circumstances of the writer, or in the occasions or subjects of his composition. The 'pomp of diction,' which marks the *Rambler*, has been vindicated by Dr. Birkbeck Hill on two grounds, one of a casual and in-

ferior nature, namely, that he had to fill a certain space in order to deliver to his publisher the tale of bricks, a circumstance tending to amplification of language;—but the other is of a higher nature and more proper to the dignity of literature, namely this, that in the *Rambler* he came before the world in a new character, as 'a majestic teacher of moral and religious wisdom.' To a writer who is full of the greatness of such a vocation, as Johnson indubitably was, a certain stateliness of language is natural, and, if well conducted, it tends to win the confidence and veneration of the reader. It was not merely that sheer necessity compelled amplification; there was also at the same time a sense of fitness and propriety which upheld Johnson when he robed his instructions in a grandiloquence which, to borrow his own words, would 'have given dignity to a bishop.' To him who preaches and to him who teaches, a certain amplification is necessary; and this is attended with variations and repetitions of the same thought, which as they are natural under the circumstances so they are felt to be just and appropriate.

The Nineteenth Century.

In the midst of great diversity, the prose of the Nineteenth century teems with reminiscences of the Eighteenth century. As in the Eleventh and even in the Twelfth century we have still the reflection of the Tenth; as the Sixteenth century (in respect of prose) is but an enlarged portrait of the Fifteenth; so the prose of the Nineteenth century is under all variations (and they are numerous) still a reflection of that Johnsonian style at which we sometimes affect to smile. Everything confirms the view that we did in the Eighteenth century reach a Third Culmination and that its most representative writer was Dr. Johnson.

This age has been remarkable for the great number of well-marked styles that have appeared; our modern prose is certainly characterized by variety and distinctness of physiognomy. But they are all based upon one recognized type; the Johnsonian style is at the root of them all. In *Sense and Sensibility* we may see that Miss Austen began in the manner

of Johnson; and the same is true of the earliest writings of Carlyle. Chalmers and Macaulay are in different senses the exponents and legitimate successors of Johnson; Chalmers of his long-robed sentences as seen in the *Rambler*, Macaulay of his more artistic groups of shorter sentences, as seen in the *Lives of the English Poets*. The only truly English Grammar that was ever written, the only one having an English basis, found that basis in the diction of Dr. Johnson. I need hardly say that I speak of Lindley Murray.

Of the early part of the century I will give two examples; one which has been promised above from Eustace's *Classical Tour*, and the other from one of the earlier sermons of Dr. Chalmers.

It is usual to take with us as guides on our journey certain works written for the purpose, and Addison's *Travels* are generally recommended; and indeed his known taste and character, together with the avowed purpose of his journey, might have justified the expectation of a finished performance. But though Addison had naturally an enlarged mind, humane feelings, and a fancy teeming with imagery, yet prejudice had narrowed his extensive views, religious acrimony had soured his temper, and party spirit had repressed his imagination. He gave therefore to one half of the nation what he owed to the whole; he considered principally how he might support one party and annoy the other; and he ran over great part of Europe, particularly Italy, not so much a Classic as a Whig traveller. In his eyes countries appeared fertile and happy, or barren and miserable, not as nature formed them, but as they were connected with France or with England, as their religion was Protestant or Catholic. Hence, he dwells with at least as much complacency on the little miserable details of German and Italian superstition, as on the interesting remains of Roman grandeur; and fills with the dreams of bigotry and the censures of intolerance, those pages which ought to have been devoted to the effusions of classical enthusiasm, and strewed with the flowers of ancient poesy. Prejudice or malevolence, in ordinary writers, excites neither surprise nor regret; the ignorance or the folly of mediocrity can claim nothing more than contempt; but the errors and defects of the wise and the good awaken more serious emotions; and while we justly lament the weakness of human nature, we are cautioned by such examples against the indulgence of passions, which could embitter the benevolence and pervert the good taste of the mild, the judicious

Addison.—John Chetwode Eustace, *A Classical Tour through Italy*, Preliminary Discourse.

Thus it is, that when Christianity becomes universal, the doings of the one party, and the desires of the other, will meet and overpass. The poor will wish for no more than the rich will be delighted to bestow; and the rule of our text, which every real Christian at present finds so practicable, will, when carried over the face of society, bind all the members of it into one consenting brotherhood. The duty of doing good to others will then coalesce with that counterpart duty which regulates our desires of good from them; and the work of benevolence will, at length, be prosecuted without that alloy of rapacity on the one hand and distrust on the other which serves so much to fester and disturb the whole of this ministration. To complete this adjustment, it is in every way as necessary to lay all the incumbent moralities on those who ask, as on those who confer; and never till the whole text, which comprehends the wishes of man as well as his actions, wield its entire authority over the species, will the disgusts and the prejudices, which form such a barrier between the ranks of human life, be effectually done away. It is not by the abolition of rank, but by assigning to each rank its duties, that peace and friendship, and order, will at length be firmly established in our world. It is by the force of principle, and not by the force of some great political overthrow, that a consummation so delightful is to be attained. We have no conception whatever, that even in millennial days, the diversities of wealth and station will at length be equalized. On looking forward to the time when kings shall be the nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers of our church, we think that we can behold the perspective of as varied a distribution of place and property as before. In the pilgrimage of life, there will still be the moving procession of the few charioted in splendor on the highway, and the many pacing by their side along the line of the same journey. There will, perhaps, be a somewhat more elevated footpath for the crowd; and there will be an air of greater comfort and sufficiency amongst them; and the respectability of evident worth and goodness will sit upon the countenance of this general population. But, bating these, we look for no great change in the external aspect of society. It will only be a moral and a spiritual change. Kings will retain their sceptres, and nobles their coronets; but as they float in magnificence along, will they look with benignant feeling on the humble wayfarers, and the

honest salutations of regard and reverence will arise to them back again: and should any weary passenger be ready to sink unfriended on his career, will he at one time be borne onwards by his fellows on his pathway, and, at another, will a shower of beneficence be made to descend from the crested equipage that overtakes him. It is Utopianism to think, that, in the ages of our world which are yet to come, the outward distinctions of life will not all be upholden. But it is not Utopianism, it is Prophecy to aver, that the breath of a new spirit will go abroad over the great family of mankind—so, that while, to the end of time, there shall be the high and the low in every passing generation, will the charity of kindred feelings, and of a common understanding, create a fellowship between them on their way, till they reach that heaven where human love shall be perfected and all human greatness is withdrawn.—Thomas Chalmers, *The Christian Law of Reciprocity* (1820).

The Nineteenth Century is characterized by two conspicuous movements, namely, the higher organization of the paragraph, and the progress in the restitution of vernacular English. On each of these heads something must be said.

1. *The Short Sentence and the Paragraph.*

We have seen above that the short sentence had already in the seventeenth century begun to raise the standard of rebellion against the classical construction in long periods. This movement has gone on progressively ever since, and it has now become the mode, and as a consequence it is often carried to excess. Properly understocd, it is very useful, and a great gain to discourse. In order to benefit by the acquirement of it, we must always keep in view these two things. First, in gaining the facility of the short sentence, we must not reject the impressiveness of the long sentence, which is most valuable for occasional use. We must learn the due place of both, and take care that our gain do not prove a loss. We must not degenerate into that manner which has been called 'snappy,' as in the following extract from a novel of the year 1888.

He wore a beautiful frock-coat, buttoned up. I like a frock-coat to be buttoned up. He had light-coloured trousers and gray gloves and a pretty cane. I like light-coloured trousers and gray gloves and a pretty cane. What colour his eyes were is more than I can

say: I only know they made me hot when they looked at me. Not that I mind being made hot; it is surely better than being made cold.

Secondly, the way to avoid an excess of this kind and to discover the right proportion of short with longer sentences, is to consider the relation of the sentence to the paragraph. The grouping of sentences into paragraphs is the true art of modern prose. If we have given up the great sentences of Hooker and Milton and Clarendon, we have a good compensation for it, and a real equivalent for the advantages of it, in our more developed sense of the function of the paragraph. I will here append a few pieces of Nineteenth century English, in various kinds which will serve either to exhibit the leaning there is in them towards the short sentence, or to display the concentrating effect of the paragraph.

Nature of the English Cabinet.—Few things in our history are more curious than the origin and growth of the power now possessed by the Cabinet. From an early period the Kings of England had been assisted by a Privy Council to which the law assigned many important functions and duties. During several centuries this body deliberated on the gravest and most delicate affairs. But by degrees its character changed. It became too large for despatch and secrecy. The rank of Privy Councillor was often bestowed as an honorary distinction on persons to whom nothing was confided and whose opinion was never asked. The sovereign, on the most important occasions, resorted for advice to a small knot of leading ministers. The advantages and disadvantages of this course were early pointed out by Bacon, with his usual judgment and sagacity: but it was not till after the Restoration that the interior council began to attract general notice. During many years old-fashioned politicians continued to regard the Cabinet as an unconstitutional and dangerous board. Nevertheless, it constantly became more and more important. It at length drew to itself the chief executive power, and has now been regarded, during several generations, as an essential part of our polity. Yet, strange to say, it still continues to be altogether unknown to the law: the names of the noblemen and gentlemen who compose it are never officially announced to the public: no record is kept of its meetings and resolutions; nor has its existence ever been recognised by any Act of Parliament.—T. B. Macaulay, *History of England*, c. ii.

Tenison was intrusted with the business of examining the

Liturgy and of collecting all those expressions to which objections had been made, either by theological or by literary critics. It was determined to remove obvious blemishes. And it would have been wise in the Commissioners to stop here. Unfortunately they determined to rewrite a great part of the Prayer Book. It was a bold undertaking, for in general the style of that volume is such as cannot be improved. The English Liturgy indeed gains by being compared even with those fine ancient Liturgies from which it is to a great extent taken. The essential qualities of devotional eloquence, conciseness, majestic simplicity, pathetic earnestness of supplication, sobered by a profound reverence, are common between the translations and the originals. But in the subordinate graces of diction the originals must be allowed to be far inferior to the translations. And the reason is obvious. The technical phraseology of Christianity did not become a part of the Latin language till that language had passed the age of maturity and was sinking into barbarism. But the technical phraseology of Christianity was found in the Anglo-Saxon and in the Norman French, long before the union of those two dialects had produced a third dialect superior to either. The Latin of the Roman Catholic services, therefore, is Latin in the last stage of decay. The English of our services is English in all the vigour and suppleness of early youth. . . . The diction of our Book of Common Prayer, on the other hand, has directly or indirectly contributed to form the diction of almost every great English writer, and has extorted the admiration of the most accomplished nonconformists, of such men as David Hume and Robert Hall.—T. B. Macaulay, *History of England*, c. xiv.

However, dexterity in composition, or *eloquence* as it may be called in a contracted sense of the word, is manifestly more or less necessary in every branch of literature, though its elements may be different in each. Poetical eloquence consists, first, in the power of illustration; which the poet uses, not as the orator, voluntarily, for the sake of clearness or ornament, but almost by constraint, as the sole outlet and expression of intense inward feeling. This spontaneous power of comparison may, in some poetical minds, be very feeble; these of course cannot show to advantage as poets. Another talent necessary to composition is the power of unfolding the meaning in an orderly manner. A poetical mind is often too impatient to explain itself justly; it is overpowered by a rush of emotions, which sometimes want of power, sometimes the indolence of inward enjoyment, prevents it from describing. Nothing is more

difficult than to analyse the feelings of our own minds; and the power of doing so, whether natural or acquired, is clearly distinct from experiencing them. Yet, though distinct from the poetical talent, it is obviously necessary to its exhibition. Hence it is a common praise bestowed upon writers, that they express what we have often felt, but could never describe. The power of arrangement, which is necessary for an extended poem, is a modification of the same talent, being to poetry what method is to logic. Besides these qualifications, poetical composition requires that command of language which is the mere effect of practice. Hence the need of careful labour to the accomplished poet,—not in order that his diction may attract, but that the language may be subjected to him. He studies the art of composition as we might learn dancing or elocution; not that we may move or speak according to rule, but that, by the very exercise our voice and carriage may become so unembarrassed as to allow of our doing what we will with them.—J. H. Newman, *Essays*, I. 24. ed. 1873.

This, or something like this, is the meaning of the idea of good as conceived by Plato. Ideas of number, order, harmony, development may also be said to enter into it. The paraphrase which has just been given of it goes beyond the actual words of Plato. We have perhaps arrived at the stage of philosophy which enables us to understand what he is aiming at, better than he did himself. We are begining to realize what he saw darkly and at a distance. But if he could have been told that this, or some conception of the same kind, but higher than this, was the truth at which he was aiming, and the need which he sought to supply, he would gladly have recognized that more was contained in his own thoughts than he himself knew. As his words are few and his manner reticent and tentative, so must the style of his interpreter be. We should not approach his meaning more nearly by attempting to define it further. In translating him into the language of modern thought, we might insensibly lose the spirit of ancient philosophy. It is remarkable that although Plato speaks of the idea of good as the first principle of truth and being, it is nowhere mentioned in his writings except in this passage. Nor did it retain any hold upon the minds of his disciples in a later generation; it was probably unintelligible to them. Nor does the mention of it in Aristotle appear to have any reference to this or any other passage in his extant writings.—B. Jowett, *Republic of Plato*, p. xcviij.

The subject of Medical Scepticism is too grave to be here passed over without some consideration. Healthy criticism of

existing belief is one thing. Mere destructive criticism with no honest purpose of *getting* at the truth is another. The former is a necessary quality in a man of full power. The latter is the frequent sign of idleness in youth, and of carelessness in advanced years. What is certain in respect of Medicine critically considered as a Science and as an Art may be thus stated. There is a true Medicine and a false Medicine. Like the wheat and the tares, they now stand together. The true is that which is based on unalterable laws of Nature; the false that which is the result of ignorance, unconscious misinterpretation, or wilful error,—ignorance of Nature, unintentional misunderstanding of her laws, wilful falsification of facts to subserve some temporary purpose. From these two, the true and the false, come all the traditions of our Art. To winnow the one from the other, to extrude the uncertain from the proved, to add to what is known, regardless of the effect on previous beliefs, is the special duty of the time in which we are now placed. If this duty were completely done we should possess the real history of an Art three thousand years old.—*Medicine in Modern Times* (1869):—'The General Relations of Medicine in Modern Times,' by Henry W. Acland, p. 19.

But this, like all other questions connected with the Virgin Queen, should be rather studied in her actions than in the opinion of the historian who relates them. Actions and words are carved upon eternity. Opinions are but forms of cloud created by the prevailing currents of the moral air. Princes, who are credited on the wrong side with the evils which happen in their reigns, have a right in equity to the honour of the good. The greatest achievement in English History, the 'breaking the bonds of Rome,' and the establishment of spiritual independence, was completed without bloodshed under Elizabeth's auspices, and Elizabeth may have the glory of the work. Many problems growing out of it were left unsettled. Some were disposed of on the scaffold of Whitehall, some in the revolution of 1688; some yet survive to test the courage and ingenuity of modern politicians.—James Antony Froude, *Reign of Elizabeth* (1870); 'Conclusion.'

For some time Mr. Disraeli then seemed resolved to make himself remarkable, to be talked about. He succeeded admirably. He was talked about. All the political and satirical journals of the day had a great deal to say about him. He is not spoken of in terms of praise as a rule. Neither has he much praise to shower about him. Anyone who looks back to the political controversies

of that time will be astounded at the language which Mr. Disraeli addresses to his opponents of the press, and which his opponents address to him. The duelling system survived then and for long after, and Mr. Disraeli always professed himself ready to sustain with his pistol anything that his lips might have given utterance to, even in the reckless heat of controversy. He kept himself well up to the level of his time in the calling of names and the swaggering. But he was making himself remarkable in political controversy as well. In the House of Commons he began to be regarded as a dangerous adversary in debate. He was wonderfully ready with retort and sarcasm. But during all the earlier part of his career he was thought of only as a free lance. He had praised Peel when Peel said something that suited him, or when to praise Peel seemed likely to wound some one else. But it was during the discussions on the abolition of the Corn Laws that he first rose to the fame of a great debater and a powerful Parliamentary orator.—Justin M'Carthy, *Short History of our own Times*, c. vij.

The following letter, or manifesto, written in the year 1863 by Abraham Lincoln, and printed in *The Century Magazine*, May 1889, affords us a good specimen of Nineteenth Century prose.

Your letter, inviting me to attend a mass meeting of unconditional Union men, to be held at the capital of Illinois on the 3rd day of September, has been received. It would be very agreeable to me to thus meet my old friends at my own home, but I cannot just now be absent from here so long as a visit there would require.

The meeting is to be of all those who maintain unconditional devotion to the Union, and I am sure my old political friends will thank me for tendering, as I do, the nation's gratitude to those other noble men whom no partisan malice or partisan hope can make false to the nation's life. There are those who are dissatisfied with me. To such I would say: You desire peace, and you blame me that you do not have it. But how can we attain it? There are but three conceivable ways. First, to suppress the rebellion by force of arms. This I am trying to do. Are you for it? If you are, so far we are agreed. If you are not for it, a second way is to give up the Union. I am against this. Are you for it? If you are, you should say so plainly. If you are not for force, nor yet for dissolution, there only remains some imaginable compromise.

I do not believe any compromise embracing the maintenance of the Union is now possible. All I learn leads to a directly opposite

belief. The strength of the rebellion is its military—its army. That army dominates all the country and all the people within its range. Any offer of terms made by any man or men within that range, in opposition to that army, is simply nothing for the present, because such man or men have no power whatever to enforce their side of a compromise if one were made with them.

To illustrate. Suppose refugees from the South and peace-men of the North get together in convention and frame and proclaim a compromise embracing a restoration of the Union; in what way can that compromise be used to keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania? Meade's army can keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania, and I think can ultimately drive it out of existence. But no paper compromise to which the controllers of Lee's army are not agreed can at all affect that army. In an effort at such compromise we should waste time which the enemy would improve to our disadvantage, and that would be all.

A compromise, to be effective, must be made either with those who control the rebel army, or with the people first liberated from the domination of that army, by the successes of our own army. Now, allow me to assure you that no word or intimation from that rebel army, or from any of the men controlling it, in relation to any peace compromise, has ever come to my knowledge or belief. All charges and insinuations to the contrary are deceptive and groundless. And I promise you that if any such proposition shall hereafter come, it shall not be rejected and kept a secret from you. I freely acknowledge myself the servant of the people, according to the bond of service—the United States Constitution—and that as such I am responsible to them.

But, to be plain, you are dissatisfied with me about the negro. Quite likely there is a difference of opinion between you and myself upon that subject. I certainly wish all men could be free, while I suppose you do not. Yet I have neither adopted nor proposed any measure which is not consistent with even your view, provided you are for the Union. I suggested compensated emancipation, to which you replied you wished not to be taxed to buy negroes. But I had not asked you to be taxed to buy negroes, except in such way as to save you from greater taxation to save the Union exclusively by other means.

You dislike the Emancipation Proclamation, and perhaps would have it retracted. You say it is unconstitutional. I think differently. I think the Constitution invests its commander-in-chief with the law of war in time of war. The most that can be said—if so much—is that slaves are property. Is there, has there ever been,

any question that by the law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever taking it helps us or hurts the enemy? Armies, the world over, destroy enemies' property when they cannot use it, and even destroy their own to keep it from the enemy. Civilised beligerents do all in their power to help themselves or hurt the enemy, except a few things regarded as barbarous or cruel. Among the exceptions are the massacre of vanquished foes and non-combatants, male and female.

But the proclamation, as law, either is valid or is not valid. If it is not valid it needs no retraction. If it is valid it cannot be retracted, any more than the dead can be brought to life. Some of you profess to think its retraction would operate favourably for the Union. Why better after the retraction than before the issue? There was more than a year and a half of trial to suppress the rebellion before the proclamation issued, the last one hundred days of which passed under an explicit notice that it was coming, unless averted by those in revolt returning to their allegiance. The war has certainly progressed as favourably for us since the issue of the proclamation as before.

I know, as fully as one can know the opinion of others, that some of the commanders of our armies in the field, who have given us our most important successes, believe the emancipation policy and the use of the colored troops constitute the heaviest blow yet dealt to the rebellion, and that at least one of these important successes could not have been achieved when it was but for the aid of black soldiers. Among the commanders holding these views are some who have never had any affinity with what is called 'Abolitionism' or with 'Republican party politics,' but who hold them purely as military opinions. I submit these opinions as being entitled to some weight against the objections often urged that emancipation and arming the blacks are unwise as military measures, and were not adopted as such in good faith. You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you —but no matter. Fight you, then, exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes. I thought that in your struggle for the Union, to whatever extent the negroes should cease helping the enemy, to that extent it weakened the enemy in his resistance to you. Do you think differently? I thought that whatever negroes can be got to do as soldiers leaves just so much

less for white soldiers to do in saving the Union. Does it appear otherwise to you? But negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us, they must be prompted by the strongest motive, even the promise of freedom. And the promise, being made, must be kept.

The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Thanks to the great North-west for it. Nor yet wholly to them. Three hundred miles up they met New England, Empire, Keystone, and Jersey, hewing their way right and left. The sunny South, too, in more colors than one, also lent a hand. On the spot, their part of the history was jotted down in black and white. The job was a great national one, and let none be banned who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who have cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro', Gettysburg, and on many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam's web-feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou; and wherever the ground was a little damp, they have been and made their tracks. Thanks to all. For the great Republic—for the principle it lives by and keeps alive—for man's vast future—thanks to all.

Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet, and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. And there will be some black men who can remember that with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet they have helped mankind on to this great consummation; while I fear there will be some white ones unable to forget that with malignant heart and deceitful speech they strove to hinder it.

Still let us not be over sanguine of a speedy, final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God, in His own good time, will give us the rightful result.

The focus of English prose is now to be sought in the periodical press. Articles in newspapers are written by men of the highest education, men of literary culture and of good

social tone; these writings are the most widely read of all that is written, and they undoubtedly represent, in the broadest sense of the word, the current standard of English Prose.

I am not saying that they furnish the finest or most perfect specimens; that is a different matter. They are written off-hand; they are printed, circulated, and have passed into the region of old almanacs, long before the time when the student of leisure would be thoughtfully revising his composition. They are limited in aim to the present; they are limited in compass by the exigencies of the publication, insomuch that a subject cannot receive full development and expansion in them; there is so much interruption in the conditions of their production that the writer has not opportunity to pursue his thought to that maturity wherein the mind kindles and glows with a creative heat. Even should any particular subject happen to be so near to the heart of the writer that something of this enthusiasm occurs to him, he is required by the very character of his office to control feeling and to maintain almost judicial reserve in the manner of his diction. Hence it comes to pass that the highest efforts of prose are out of the journalist's reach, and when we say that the focus of prose is now in the newspapers, we confine our view to that average standard of prose which is naturally within the function of journalism.

It is only after long incubation that the mind of an author warms to his thought in such a manner as to bring out the fullest and best expression of which his genius is capable, and therefore it is only in the more deliberate and matured productions that we can expect to find the highest specimens of English prose. But in the rapidly written leader of the best daily papers, we certainly find these three things the standard pitch of elevation, the most perfect exhibition of lucidity, and the modern art of grouping the discourse in paragraphs.

Notwithstanding the various criticisms passed upon the new Code in points of detail, the tone of encomium in which it was spoken of from both sides of the House was unmistakable. Sir William Hart Dyke is to be congratulated upon the chorus of approbation with which the Code has been received. He need not

be unduly stung by the acrid seasoning which Mr. Buxton mixed with his compliments on Tuesday. That politician congratulated Sir W. Hart Dyke 'on having been fortunate enough to hold the office of Vice-President of the Council at the time when this Code had to be introduced.' Allowing that the new rules are mainly the embodiment of the recommendations of a Royal Commission, and rendering all proper praise to the subordinate officials of the Education Department, the carrying through of a Code that gives such general satisfaction reflects no little credit upon the Minister who presided over the work and upon the Government of which he is a member. He is fortunate, however, in so far as it has fallen to him to revolutionize a system of dispensing State education which had become thoroughly unpopular in the country. Perhaps too much has been made of the so-called 'perniciousness' of the system of payment by result. In one sense, every practicable system of dispensing public money for educational purposes must be one of payment by results, nor does the new Code pretend to depart from a principle which governs every business transaction, whether conducted by the individual or the State. The difference between the new system and the old lies in the mode of ascertaining the excellence of the result. Hitherto we have ascertained it by insisting that every pupil's education shall be run into one groove, and then taking its measurement according to rigid rules incapable of accommodation to individual cases. We now propose to do it by giving greater latitude to examiners and teachers; and, at one and the same blow, the field of education is widened as well to meet idiosyncrasies of character as to fit the pupil in a more practical fashion for the struggle of life. The teacher of the future is to fill a position of dignity, instead of acting as a mechanical crammer of small heads with useless and uncongenial knowledge that is to 'pay.' The child is to have the path of knowledge made more attractive. In early years he is to be taught the deft use of his hands, either by the kindergarten methods so strongly advocated by some speakers last night or by other means; while in his later schooldays drawing and manual training of an advanced kind are to be compulsory. In the same way a more important share of the schooltime of girls will be claimed by cookery and laundry-work. *The Times*, 7 June, 1890.

The transition which has established the short sentence and the paragraph, is a result of wide and comprehensive tendencies which are not too obscure to be observed and verified. It is simply a new and powerful assertion of native

genius against scholastic tutelage. Of the present century the most conspicuous indications are those which point to the exhaustion of classical sources and the return to a natural affection for the mother-tongue. There is in all cultivated minds some slight leaning towards a contempt for learned words when needlessly used by others; and withal some jealousy of admitting them into their own composition. Ever since the revival of domestic literature in the eighteenth century a change has been working gradually but profoundly, and a sound natural taste for English is steadily progressing. Old authors have been imitated upon a great scale, not as by Chatterton and Ireland for the purpose of imposture, but as works of art ministering to a public taste more or less clearly manifested. It is enough to recall Dr. Arnold's narrative of the earliest Roman History, Thackeray's *Esmond*, the *Chronicles of the Schomberg-Cotta Family*, and some other modern antiques that have been well received, such as those under the names of Margaret Roper and Mary Powell. The rapid spread of German as a juvenile study has worked in the same direction; but it would be a mistake to regard this as the cause and origin of the movement. It originated in nothing external or incidental, but in deep inner forces that have long been operative though overshadowed. These are now asserting themselves by a natural and beneficial reaction, all the more surely by reason of that slowness which has been impressed upon their movement not merely by long coercion and restraint, but also by a salutary awe for magisterial authorities still subsisting.

Happily however, all writers do not affect the short sentence. There seems to be something of affinity between æsthetic pursuits and a taste for the elaborated classical sentence. Readers will easily recall the names of Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Pater. Such authors may be called public benefactors if only because they resist the baneful tendency towards uniformity of fashion. Still, it is worthy of remark, that Mr. Ruskin, in his reprints, has sometimes broken up his long sentences, and has even called attention to the fact in a footnote.

2. *The Restitution of native English.*

It can hardly be necessary to insist on the fact that our time is characterized by a desire for the restitution of vernacular English. Indeed, to say this much, is to leave the matter understated. We may go so far as to say this, that amidst all the diversities of literary English of this century, the one predominant and universal character is the growing appetite for the original and native forms of the mother tongue.

I believe that Dr. Charles Mackay (memorable as the author of the song 'Cheer, boys, cheer') justly represents the best educated opinion of the present day, when in a posthumous Article in the January number (1890) of *The Nineteenth Century* entitled 'The Ascertainment of English' he thus indites:—

> But the coinage of anglicised words of Latin origin is still too abundant, and either overload the language by their superfluity or enfeeble it by dilution and by distinctions without differences.

I will not here, in this summary conclusion, stop to illustrate in detail;—I will merely recall one familiar fact which appears to me to be worth a hundred. It is a commonplace of our day to assume that Johnson's prose is excessively classical, and that it is too Latinized and magniloquent for our modern taste. Well, the fact is, that Johnson never used Latin words prodigally, he always used them with discrimination and knowledge, and in those of his writings which are best known to us now, it would take a good search to find one or two telling examples of what we mean by a 'Johnsonian phrase.' It must have sometimes been observed, how poor a show they are able to get together who try to exemplify Johnson's reputation for sesquipedalian words. Macaulay stamped 'Johnsonese' with a character which all the world has believed in and adopted. I do not say that this general opinion is altogether groundless, but I say that the ground of it is very different from that which is generally supposed. The ground of it is not so much in Johnson's diction, as in our habits of thought and in the tendencies of our time. It is so

far in Johnson, as his writings stand with us for the type of classicism, because the classicists of the seventeenth century have fallen into oblivion and are so to speak unknown. The classic diction of Johnson bears the brunt of contrast with our modern ideal, which is after all Johnsonian, with a difference. Ever since Johnson's time the taste for native English has been steadily progressing and the chasm is ever growing wider between us and the classicism even of Johnson, moderate and dignified as it is. When we join in the smile at Johnsonese, we consent and witness to the general revival of national affection towards the earlier life of the mother tongue.

Among the evidences of the force with which this movement has made itself felt, must be counted the strange jealousy which it has awakened in some branches of the educational interest. There is really no cause why it should be formidable to anyone, but some people have taken alarm in the name of classical education. A few years ago when there seemed a chance for English literature at Oxford, there began a system of indoctrination through the periodical press, and as a sample of this teaching I extract the following, which is quoted with absolute exactness though without reference. It is a fair sample of the preposterous talk which has been evoked by the alarm of the restitution of English.

> It must not be forgotten that Latin underlies the whole fabric of English literature and the whole structure of English thought, insomuch that its abandonment as a means of mental training would produce a breach of continuity, so to speak, between the past and the future of learning, and would effectually detach coming generations from the 'wisdom of our ancestors.'

This idea that English literature rests upon a classical basis has been formulated, and industriously circulated as the watchword of a pedantic faction, and hardly any organ of current literature has proved strong enough or vigilant enough to secure itself against the insidious entrance of this absurd indoctrination. For historical truth it is on a level with that favorite spermology of the Liberation Society, which seeks to diffuse the notion that the Church of England was founded by Act of Parliament in the reign of Henry the Eighth.

This cry has been forced into so effective a currency, that there is no saying where it may not be met with, and it was in protest against some sentiments of this complexion that Professor Huxley wrote the letter from which the following sentences are extracted, and which appeared in *The Times* of August 5, 1890.

Medical Education.—Sir,—I trust that the importance to the general public of a sound system of medical education will lead you to find room for a few observations on that subject, although the conclusions to which they tend are, unhappily, widely different from those which must be drawn from your comments upon the address of the President of the British Medical Association now meeting in Birmingham.

. . . . . .

Those who know what modern medicine is, are well aware that four years would be but a brief period of study, even if it could be allotted exclusively to the practical branches of the medical science and art. But in the present condition of middle-class education the youth of seventeen too commonly enters the medical school, not only devoid of the slightest tincture of scientific knowledge, but, what is worse, so completely habituated to learn only from books or oral teaching that the attempt to learn from things and to get his knowledge at first hand is something new and strange. Thus a large proportion of medical students spend much of their first year in learning how to learn, and when they have done that, in acquiring the preliminary scientific knowledge, with which, under any rational system of education they would have come provided.

Dr. Wade has unquestionably laid his finger upon the source of this unfortunate state of things. He asks examining bodies to clear their minds of the Latin superstition, which leads them to impose an utterly useless burden upon students and renders the proper organization of medical education impossible. I am aware that in employing this word 'useless' I come into direct collision with the writer of your article, but I beg leave to be permitted to show cause for this *outrecuidance*.

I am the last person to question the value of a thorough and comprehensive classical education; but I fail to see that there is anything in common between such high intellectual discipline, and the process by which young boys are ground up to the pitch of being able to construe some easy Latin or Greek; nor even between a literary knowledge of Latin and so much acquaintance with that

tongue as may suffice to turn Celsus into English, or to concoct a prescription in a jargon which would have made a Pompeian apothecary explode.

My complaint is that the present requirements are fatal as much to the literary as to the scientific training of the medical student. The time wasted in forcing upon him a sham acquaintance with Latin should be devoted to teaching him the use of his own language, and the right enjoyment of its literary wealth, no less than to the study of science.

I have a great love for our native tongue, and a profound sense of its perfections as an instrument of thought and expression. All my life I have been striving to learn how to use it, and the longer I go on the less easily do I find myself satisfied. But I confess it never occurred to me that I had taken the wrong road and that the way to good English lay through Latin. My impression has been that the genius of the English language is widely different from that of Latin; and that the worst and the most debased kinds of English style are those which ape Latinity. I know of no purer English prose than that of John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe; I doubt if the music of Keats's verse has ever been surpassed; it has not been my fortune to hear any orator who approached the powerful simplicity, the limpid sincerity, of the speech of John Bright. Yet Latin literature and these masters of English had little to do with one another. On the other hand, how easy would it be, were it not invidious, to cull specimens of everything that is bad in style, of that copious phrase-mongering which loses sense in sound, and substitutes passion for force, in the productions of minds soaked in classical lore.

After a career of well-nigh twelve hundred years, our prose is reverting to itsearliest pattern. And this reflection is not merely sentimental—it has a practical bearing. The vague instinctive tendency to return to native sources contains in it a true indication, but it wants to be definitely guided; and the historical review of these chapters furnishes a clue to the direction and discipline which is requisite. For it shows us that in this long series of years there have been Epochs which claim a pre-eminent attention, moments in which the language has seemed to approach maturity and perfection, has bloomed out with conspicuous beauty, and has ripened a durable norm or pattern. Something of this kind may be observed in those other languages (they are very few) which,

like ours, can show a long history. But the events of English history have been peculiarly favourable to great ranges of elevation and depression in language and literature. There are three conspicuous moments of highest maturity, marked by the attainment of new standards, which have been beacons for long ages after. These three moments are in the Tenth, the Fifteenth, and the Eighteenth centuries, and it is the attainment of the language at those several dates that furnishes the chief norms or standards of English Prose.

In the case of the two latter epochs there is a universal recognition of the authority of their respective standards. Our present usage bases itself avowedly upon the prose of the Eighteenth century as exhibited in its two most prominent representatives Addison and Johnson. Though the prose of the Nineteenth century is not without a good and clear character of its own, and although there is abundance of individual physiognomy in recent styles, yet no one would pretend that we have opened another era of English prose, or deny that we are still in that era which was opened for us by such pioneers as Defoe, Bunyan, and Dryden, and which was matured and made authoritative by Addison and Johnson.

And if it is clear that we owe this allegiance to the great type set up in the last century, it is not less manifest that we are still sensibly influenced by the sway of the Fifteenth century. These two authorities do not conflict or jar. They are in good understanding and harmony so far as the ambition of that which is young can be expected to submit to the authority of the old. The Fifteenth century norm is still—not wholly but—largely the parent of that of the Eighteenth. New elements have been brought in by the general growth of the nation and more especially by the diffusion of classical education. But just in proportion as the modern language stands off from the elder norm, in the same proportion does a new reverence for the elder spring up continually. This is displayed by a sentiment towards the English of our Bible, which is substantially the prose of the Fifteenth century. The debt which we owe to the Bible of 1611, as a mere standard of prose, is universally admitted. But there is

a more particular and special debt of the same kind, which is almost wholly unobserved. Of all that was produced in the way of Scripture translations between 1525 and 1611, there is one particular piece which has exerted the most constant and the most beneficial influence. The Common Prayer Book Version of the Psalms, which is from the 'Great Bible' of 1539, and is substantially the version of Coverdale which was printed in 1535 keeps us ever in contact with the pattern of the Fifteenth century. Of all the samples of Fifteenth century prose that still surround us and take part in our continual education, this is the purest, the most perfect, and the most influential.

It remains only to say a word for the diction of the Tenth Century, the earliest of those Norms which our Prose in its diversified career has attained to establish;—shall it have no practical use any more, shall it lie always dead as a curiosity of the museum, and shall it have no Renascence? Or shall we recognize the fact which now looks us full in the face, that in our fine Tenth Century Prose we have the very standard we are in need of. We want a standard for the discipline and guidance of that vernacular instinct which in these latter decades has so plainly declared itself, and there is one of our three best norms that is out of employment and ready for new service. This seems to me to be the chief lesson which our historical review is calculated to teach us, and this has been a chief aim in the composition of these chapters on the History of English Prose.

The life of language, like all life within our observation, is sustained by the consumption of material. Everything bears witness to the fact that, for the present at least and for a very long time to come, the classic source is no longer available to any considerable extent. We drank deep of it, we bowed down on our knees to drink, nay, we laid ourselves flat upon the ground and forgat all moderation in our reckless thirst. A great reaction ensued and native idiom was re-asserted, and then after a space came, in Johnson, that judicious proportion of Latin admixture which, even while we half disown it, has been admitted as the pattern ever since. We have been sated, we have rebelled, we have been re-

conciled. All the stages have been gone through, and now there is no present room for any more Classicism. But we have a dead language of our own native growth, serviceable for the same uses as other literary languages that are dead, and pre-eminently serviceable to us, the children of a late posterity, for new pabulum to sustain the vital forces of the grandest instrument of communication that the world has ever produced.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PEN OF A READY WRITER.

Apology for the Method of this Treatise—Rules must be forgotten; but need not be reproached—Analogy of public speaking—advice given to John Bright—Cobbett's advice to his nephew—Quaintness.

Hindrances—The notion that it is an easy thing to write well in one's mother tongue. Goethe. Want of self-restraint—excessive readiness. 'Chatteration.'

Aids—Ancillary studies—Further tabulation of trilogies—Grammar—Exercises in description; Mr. L. Stevenson, Nathaniel Hawthorne—Exercises in Translation; Gibbon—Franklin's two kinds of exercise—The exercise of translation from Old English—Numerous indications of hunger for the true vernacular—attention to the nucleus of the vocabulary—the Thousand Romanic words—About Essay-writing; the opinion of Mr. John Morley—Mark Twain's theory—Reading of good authors.

General Conclusion.

> True ease in writing comes from Art, not Chance,
> As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
>
> ALEXANDER POPE.

LOOKING back now over the chapters and sections behind, I can fancy an outcry raised of derision against me, for making so unnecessarily much of a plain and simple matter. Let a man, it may be said, just learn to write, and then put down quite naturally and simply what he has to say to the men of his generation. Why such an elaborate study, such a long preparation; so many chapters and sections and subsections about the Art of writing the mother tongue?

Is then the Art of writing English an Art of smaller compass or easier achievement than the Art of the Musician or of the Painter? Ask now these Artists, and hear what they will say, if you ask them whether they in their vocations have made studies so elaborate, whether they have spent so much time and labour in the preliminary and preparatory stages of their pursuits, as is sketched in this treatise for the writer of English?

Who is there that cannot answer this question for himself—who, that is so ignorant of the long, minute, detailed, and patient toil which Painters and Musicians cheerfully undergo, before they are considered as even through the apprenticeship of their Art?

How analogous these Arts of expression are to the Art of writing it is not necessary to argue, because the analogy is manifest at a glance. Neither is it necessary to insist, that we who desire to write, as well as they who desire to play or to paint, acceptably, have the same need to learn severally if not the whole accumulated tradition of our predecessors in the practice of the same Arts, yet the essentials of that long tradition, the sifted results. And after all, the limited aim of those Arts is to address one particular faculty of perception, whereas we address ourselves to the whole mind of man, emotion and intelligence alike. Nor is this by any means all that can be said to disabuse the mind of those who think it superfluous to make any great preparations for the Art of writing English. The preparation here adumbrated offers the benefit of a continual discipline to the mind that will submit to training; and the Art itself when acquired is not a mere opening or outlet for thoughts which are in the writer, but it is indeed such a support to the whole frame and system of his mental faculties, that it is not too much to call it an instrument for the extension of the Power of Thought.

As the faculty of vision is enlarged by the use of optical instruments; as the reach of the eye is extended in one direction by the telescope and in another direction by the microscope, so, even so and with indefinite capacity of further extension, is the faculty of thought enlarged by the instrumentality of that Art whose proper tool and emblem is the Pen.

No one who has not studied the subject can have the faintest idea of the depths of human language as regards its artistic capabilities. Readers read, and have powerful effects produced upon them, but know not how or why; perhaps even fancy that they could do the same if they had time to write a book. Great effects are not produced by long or sounding or erudite words, but by a delicate sensitiveness and a subtle manipulation which can only be attained by practice and culture. The

following from a notice of Mr. Stevenson's *Strange Case* may tend to make this clearer :—

Nor is it the mere charm of the story, strange as it is, which fascinates and thrills us. Mr. Stevenson is known for a master of style, and never has he shown his resources more remarkably than on this occasion. We do not mean that the book is written in excellent English—that must be a matter of course ; but he has weighed his words and turned his sentences so as to sustain and excite throughout the sense of mystery and of horror. The mere artful use of an 'it' for a 'he' may go far in that respect, and Mr. Stevenson has carefully chosen his language and missed no opportunity.—*The Times*, 25 January 1886.

Let no one flatter himself that he can get this faculty without the preliminary pains of apprenticeship ; any such a dream can only end in disappointment. It is not an easy matter to write English Prose that is worth reading ;—but lest this should seem to any to be a piece of arbitrary and exclusive dogmatism, I appeal to one of the representatives of public opinion.

Anybody can set up as an author ; at least, anybody thinks he can, and is free to try. A few sheets of foolscap, a bottle of ink, and a pen, are the stock-in-trade. So the young author is apt to suppose, until he discovers, from bitter experience, that some other things are necessary. But that is a discovery which does not always dawn on him at the outset of his career.—*The Standard*, 2 February, 1889.

The progress of our enquiry has unfolded to us more and more how numerous are the elements in the Art of Writing English ; and what a number of rules, directions, and cautions are to be taken into consideration by the writer. But it must not be supposed that he is to write with the consciousness of all these rules and directions present to his mind at the time of his writing. On the contrary he must be entirely unconscious of the existence of any rule at all, or at least the nearer he is to maturity and perfection the nearer will he be to so enviable a detachment. If there is any exception to be made to this broad and general statement, it is in the matter of the Choice of Words. The sentiment of leaning either to the left hand or to the right, in the work he is about to address

himself to, may well be present to his mind, like the difference of sentiment in a painter's mind according as it is a landscape or a portrait that he is designing. For, as before said, the whole vestment of diction and rhythm will be influenced as by a kind of congruity according as the writer is inclining to one or other side of the columned vocabulary.

On the 2nd of June 1888, the following remarkable sentence appeared in *The Times*, in a letter urging the study of modern languages at the Universities, by some other means (not explained) than 'the false and unreal art of grammar.'

> Slight reflection must convince us that the rules of grammar are useless for that which they are popularly supposed to teach—viz., good speaking and writing; for a person who has mastered them at once proceeds to forget and reject them, if he desires to acquire ease and style in speaking or writing, and resorts to the means that observation, care, and practice afford.

Herein is contained the unnatural union of a real truth and a false inference. The oblivion of rules with the growth of a firm habit in practice is not peculiar to Grammar and the Art of writing, but is common to all Arts alike; and the strange novelty of its discovery in the case of Grammar proves not the author's inference that 'the rules of grammar are useless for that which they are popularly supposed to teach.' He would himself hardly think it necessary to answer a person who should maintain that the characters of the Alphabet become useless so soon as we have lost all consciousness of having ever learnt them, because it is just when they have become a second nature to us and are unconsciously employed, that their highest rate of usefulness is realized.

I well remember the burst of merriment which greeted a lady, who sitting down to whist asked for her card of rules. She played only for the entertainment of others, and she was rather defective in the elements of the game. One of her children had made her a present of the rules, and she had the droll idea that they should be on the baize under her eye as she was playing. In writing prose as in playing whist, the acquisition of elements must be an operation by itself, kept well apart from the practice of their application.

The advice has often been given to those who desire to be speakers, not to be too sedulous in verbal preparation. The following is but one instance among many. It was the privilege of Mr. Aldis to give this particular piece of advice to John Bright when he was in his earliest manhood. The incident is related in the Life of Mr. Bright by Barnett Smith in the very words of Mr. Aldis, who had come to Rochdale to speak at a meeting of the Bible Society, and who found himself associated with the interesting young stranger, who was a guest at the same house with himself. He proceeds:

Soon a slender, modest young gentleman came, who surprised me by his intelligence and thoughtfulness. I took his arm on the way to the meeting, and I thought he seemed nervous. I think it was his first public speech, at all events in such connexion. It was very eloquent and powerful, and carried away the meeting, but it was elaborate and *memoriter*. On our way back, as I congratulated him, he said that such efforts cost him too dear, and asked me how I spoke so easily. I then took the full advantage of my seniority to set forth my notions, which I need not repeat here, except this—that in his case, as in most, I thought it would be best not to burden the memory too much, but having carefully prepared and committed any portions where special effect was desired, merely to put down other things in the desired order, leaving the wording of them to the moment. Years rolled away. I had entirely forgotten the name of the young Friend, when the Free Trade Bazaar was held in London. One of those engaged for it—Mr. Baker, of Stockport—calling on me, asked if I had called on Mr. Bright. I said I had not been able to attend the meetings, and did not personally know him at all. He replied, 'You must, for I heard him say that you gave him his first lesson in public speaking.' I went to a subsequent meeting, and recognized the young Friend of 1832.

The self-same advice seems to be good for the writer as for the speaker. He should not too curiously scrutinize his words in the moment of performance, but he should have his exercises in the language conducted apart, and when he writes he should write in the diction which offers itself.

In this item we may profit by the experience of Mr. Cobbett. He had great experience as a journalist, and he was a man of shrewd practical sense, and these were his instructions to his nephew.

The order of the matter will be, in almost all cases, that of your thoughts. Sit down to write what you have thought, and not to think what you shall write. Use the first words that occur to you, and never attempt to alter a thought; for that which has come of itself into your mind is likely to pass into that of another more readily and with more effect than anything which you can, by reflection, invent.

Never stop to make choice of words. Put down your thoughts in words just as they come. Follow the order which your thoughts will point out; and it will push you on to get it upon the paper as quickly and as clearly as possible.

Thoughts come much faster than we can put them upon paper. They produce one another: and this order of their coming is, in almost every case, the best possible order that they can have on paper; yet, if you have several in your mind, rising above each other in point of force, the most forcible will naturally come the last upon paper.

Any mechanical considerations must at the utmost be entertained only in a vague and remote manner at the moment of composition. Cobbett is certainly right in the main when he counsels his young disciple to write unhesitatingly, taking the words as they come, not pausing for choice of words, and taking the topics of the subject in the order in which they present themselves. On the whole this will be best; and even if not always best for the success of the piece in hand at the moment, it will be best for the formation of a habit of Art in the long run. In the acquirement of every Art, the artist must begin by producing imperfect work, and his failures must form the avenue to his ultimate success. He should notice the points of failure, and the causes, and be on his guard against them in future, and thus acquire an artistic habit of writing offhand in such a manner as to express his meaning and satisfy his taste.[1]

It is a risky thing to declare a difference of opinion with Mr. Pater, but we cannot think he has hit the nail upon the head when he thus defines the aim of modern literary art—

—to induce order upon the contorted, proportionless accumulation

[1] It was said of Isocrates that he devoted too much attention to the arrangement of his words—in compositione adeo diligens ut cura ejus reprehendatur. Quintilian, X. 1 § 79.

of our knowledge and experience, our science and history, our hopes and disillusions, and in effecting this, to do consciously what has been done hitherto too unconsciously, to write our English language as the Latins wrote theirs, as the French write, as scholars should write.—*Appreciations*; 'Classicism and Romanticism.'

Nothing is more difficult to define than the degree in which consciousness should enter into the exercise of language and of the literary art;—but we give our voice deliberately in preference for a low degree of literary consciousness at the moment and in the act of composition. It is by the minimizing of consciousness that a whole Style is produced, free from caprice and mannerism and zig-zag.

If instead of giving our attention to the main thing, that namely which we have to say, we dwell over the choice of words with a fond curiosity, we are apt to produce sentences which have a touch of quaintness. We may define quaintness as a superficial curiosity of phrase and a whimsical word-ornamentation. Quaint diction was once in favour, but that is now long ago;—it was in the first part of the seventeenth century. The prince of that style (at least among authors whose books are still redd) is Thomas Fuller, the author of *The Worthies*.

After the Restoration quaintness was no longer in fashion, and there even appeared symptoms of a reaction against it, as well as against the rotundity of the classic sentence, in an almost studied carelessness and negligence. This is to be traced in pamphlets and other ephemeral literature, and especially in the writings of Roger L'Estrange, as noticed in a previous chapter.[1] We seldom see any quaintness now, unless we are to fix that character upon Carlyle. And if a chief element in quaintness be an excessive elaboration of words, such as sometimes comes between the reader and his view of the subject of discourse, it is not easy altogether to acquit Carlyle of it, although his excellent instructions (above quoted) ought to be a preservative against it.

One of the evils of quaintness is this, that it defeats its own end. A writer who habitually strives to be pointed and

[1] The Twelfth Chapter.

smart, and to put a fine edge on it, will find it very difficult to invent a salient phrase when the occasion calls for it. There are times when a startling word or phrase is of great effect, and these occasions can be seized only by those who are habitually sober and natural. A quaint expression now and then, rarely and in the right place, is highly effective. Burke was not given to the curiosity of nice word-picking, but his words come easily and naturally, by honest well-formed habit. Nevertheless it may be called quaint, when he said of John Howard the philanthropist, that he had spent his life 'in the circumnavigation of charity;'—and it was very effective.

A young writer is apt to fancy he has a mind teeming with thoughts, and that he wants nothing but the right words to represent them. Whereas the truth more probably is, that he is in a hurry to bring out what he has not yet matured and digested in his own mind. In this stage of effervescence it is better not to put pen to paper at all. This is the stage for reading and seeing what others have thought on like subjects and how they have said it. By and by, if there is real thought, it will come out in an orderly and serial manner, and then, if he begins to write, he will find appropriate and congruous expression come to clothe his thought. At this stage he should write what is in his mind in such terms as present themselves. Nothing can be perfected without practice, and first attempts will have faults. The young writer should go on, he should put himself somewhat in the position of a speaker who is on his legs and must say what he has to say; and this rigour over himself will in due course produce the right sort of work. It will save him from a doting fondness for showy or pretentious words which is the bane of simplicity, directness, and unity.[1]

But when we talk of writing freely and off-hand, we must not convey the notion of too great facility. One of the most serious of all impediments is an idea that may very possibly beset the inexperienced mind, that to write English is an easy

[1] Anent word-picking writers Constable makes one of his characters say: 'They seem to pen down their thoughts at a venture, first chusing their words by the bulk and sound, and then forcing 'em into a pretended context; though in reality their very way and jog of writing naturally throws them out of true connection.'—*Reflections upon Accuracy of Style* (1731), p. 64.

matter. It is so easy to talk English, why not equally easy to write English? A superficial study of the best authors may foster this delusion, because the performances of the most perfect art have such an air of ease about them as if they had come without labour.

The notion that it is easy is one that is relaxing to effort, as it destroys the motive to exertion, and too often the error continues to hang about a man until the opportunity of culture is past. It is well therefore for a student to take at first a just measure of the extent of the undertaking, and it is one of the motives of this treatise by exhibition of details to impart a correct notion of that extent. It was not without an adequate sense of the task that Goethe mastered the art of writing in his mother tongue, and after a long endeavour he exclaimed 'At length, after forty years, I have learned to write German.'

Among hindrances may be reckoned the disposition to catch at some one sovereign recipe for writing good English, such as the avoidance of Romanic and Latin words, and the restriction of choice so far as possible to Saxon. This defies the rule of variety, involves monotony, and by a weary repetition attracts undue and unprofitable attention to particular words, all which things interfere with the main purpose of every writer, which naturally is to be understood with ease and to be followed with pleasure. In the sentence annexed the triple occurrence of *deed* was not necessitated by any poverty of the language, it adds no impressiveness to the statement, and gives no pleasure to the ear, and in short can be accounted for only on the supposition that the writer had bound himself under an arbitrary rule, a supposition which is justified by canons he has sometimes formulated.

> The harrying of Northern England was a deed which was denounced by men not indisposed to make the best of William's deeds as a deed on which the wrath of God was sure to follow.—E. A. Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, IV. 294.

Every elementary discipline including that of self-control must have become matter of habit before the pen can be permitted to run with perfect freedom. For the ready pen

may become, like the ready tongue, a wanton and slippery member—which may easily outrun discretion. I do not merely mean that it may say things better left unsaid—that is a matter which is not quite within the scope of this treatise. But, the mere act of saying *all* that can be forced up is bad as Art. The skilful driver does not abandon the rein and let the horses spend themselves; the cunning archer never stretches his bow quite to its utmost. Eagerness is a foe to grace, as Dante says; and all effort, to be beautiful, must imply a store of latent force.

For example, here is eulogy of Charles Lamb; let any one say, whether the writer of such an unbridled laudation is likely to carry his reader with him, or whether he is more likely to provoke a captious incredulity.

> No good criticism of Lamb, strictly speaking, can ever be written; because nobody can do justice to his work who does not love it too well to feel himself capable of giving judgment on it. And if such a reader as this should undertake to enter the lists against any of Lamb's detractors, or to engage in debate with any of his half-hearted and semi-supercilious partisans, he would doubtless find himself driven or tempted to break all bounds of critical reason in his panegyric of a genius so beloved.

In other words, the writer is hardly equal to the task which he has assumed. We naturally think of Horace's caution, which is as applicable to the prose author as to the poet:

> Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, æquam
> Viribus: et versate diu, quid ferre recusent
> Quid valeant humeri. Cui lecta potenter erit res,
> Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo.

I have endeavoured throughout this treatise as far as possible to consider the use of language apart from the matter of thought. But the two things, the thought and the garb of language, are so intimately related—some philosophers say they are one and the same, that the thought is the language and the language is the thought—however this be they are so far inseparable that where we treat of the one, the other will hardly go untouched. Here we must speak of matter so far as this, that a writer must have matter in

him. If he has nothing to say, he may indeed write, but he will never write well. For to writing well there goes a purpose, which renders the discourse instinct with motive and with life. This gives progression, and preserves the discourse from sinking into twaddle. Writers who write merely to fill the page, may hover about their subject without getting any further. But the writer who has a purpose is in earnest, he has a goal before him, and he will never (unless where reiteration serves his purpose) say over again what is already contained in a previous sentence. It is not the business of any writer to say all that can be said about his subject, but only so much as may illustrate the drift of his present treatment of the subject. It was his endless talking about and about his themes, which made some of Carlyle's writings insufferable. A happy term for it was Baroness Bunsen's 'chatteration.' Madame Bunsen, speaking of T. Carlyle upon the whole with admiration, says:—

> Carlyle taxes one's patience to a still greater amount than ever, by wilful chatteration with the pen, at unmeasured length—as though time stands still while he spreads out his grains of sand innumerable—each severally insignificant, but which, on his system, are to present the truth and reality of events and characters at last.—*Life and Letters of Baroness Bunsen*, by Augustus J. C. Hare.

A man who has achieved an extraordinary reputation, and who has tasted flattery, may come to fancy that any product of his pen, however feeble, is worthy of publication. Such a man, though a prose author, shares in a measure the privilege of the poet, who when he has produced a brilliant passage, may sleep awhile. But this is no example for the guide of ordinary practice. It is well for a prose writer to preserve a high sense of respect for his readers. This will keep him up to a worthy level of elevation, maintain his standard of execution, and secure him against pettiness or negligence.

The general sobriety of prose, as it forbids high rhapsodic flights, so it requires us never to fall below a dignified minimum of elevation. The poet is judged by his best passages, and the delighted reader hardly heeds the intervening depres-

sions, but this lenity of indulgence is not extended, nor indeed is it legitimately due, to Prose.

The rule once established that there must not be much searching for words at the moment of composition, while at the same time a fine and even an exquisite discrimination of words is of the very essence of good writing, it follows as a manifest corollary, that there must be ancillary exercisings and practisings in the Vocabulary if the writer is to have a ready command of its wealth of resource without the conscious effort of search. It is too commonly assumed that philological studies are wholly of a scientific nature, and have no practical application, at least none that comes home to everybody. In an offhand way we see this asserted or implied by people who do not know or care much about the matter, and too easily admitted or too little contradicted by those who do.

The fact is that next after rudimentary grammar[1] and the perusal of good authors, Philology is precisely the study that is required by him who would qualify himself in earnest for the practical Art of writing English. This is indeed no more than may be said generally of the preparation for writing any language; but to English—which depends for its effect upon choice of words more than any other language ancient or modern—it applies with a force altogether peculiar.

The young writer will do well to familiarize himself with the gradations of words presented to his eye in the lists of the Chapter at the head of this treatise. He will find there a good field of discipline for bringing the wealth of the English vocabulary within his command. And he may exercise himself profitably upon that same ground by seeking to make further additions to the tabulation. For there is no reason to suppose that the columns there given are in any proximate sense exhaustive of the material. I have used no systematic method in constructing those tables, I have ransacked no

[1] I say 'next after rudimentary grammar' because I think there is cause to apprehend that this study, so common, so hackneyed in elementary schools, may be neglected merely for this reason (which however springs out of its excellence) that it *is* common. And yet there is no study so profitable, so calculated to open the mind for the enjoyment of literature, or for the production of it.

dictionary for them, have waded through no vocabularies;—I have simply jotted down from time to time any example that accident cast in my way. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that the diligent student will find the field for further collection only a little less productive than if I had never gleaned over it. And certainly the practice of observing these trilogies is calculated to familiarize the mind with the resources of our vocabulary and the diversities of shade and colour in the properties of words.

When a writer has a flow of thought, it is most encouraging and delightful if the right words will come at the right moment. It is not merely an aid to felicity of expression, but it adds wings to thought. Both reader and writer reap the benefit. How often do we see a good sentence marred by some violent make-shift, due to the poverty of the writer's vocabulary. In the Number of the *Quarterly Review* now current at the date of writing (No. 335, January 1889, p. 72) the crude word 'unimpugnable' would never have stood where it does, if the writer had given due attention to the vocabulary of the mother tongue.

Mr. Louis Stevenson has told us that his readiness in the choice of happy words was not attained without a long and patient discipline. From boyhood it was his habit to carry about with him a note-book and pencil, and to seize every favourable occasion for writing a description of the objects that happened to surround him. The value of this example is increased by the fact that other successful writers have done the same. This was the practice of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and it appears to have been maintained by him all through life, and his note-books are filled with a mass of indiscriminate and trivial details, which have no meaning but as sketches in outline, and exercises in the art of writing.

The advantage of this discipline is that it gives a range of vocabulary as well as readiness and felicity in the use of it. The disadvantage of it is that it tends rather to cultivate readiness in words than useful employment of words as exponents of thought. It needs no great insight to perceive that in our day there is a real danger lest the reading public should be fed upon chaff instead of wheat. It does not follow, be-

cause the authors named took nothing but benefit from the practice, that therefore it would be equally good for all men. Men of rich and solid minds want only to be supplied with the faculty of ready expression. But for the shallow, the ambitious, the ignorant, the pretentious, to have this faculty is a public misfortune and tends to mystify the minds of those who are in the inceptive stage of a literary taste. Facility in utterance whether in speech or writing ought not to outrun the stores of thought;—both ought to grow together. And therefore I hesitate to recommend this discipline without qualification: it should however be used with other and severer exercises.

Still more important than a good choice of words and phrases is the art of combining them in effective discourse, in appropriate sentences and paragraphs. Here is room for much cultivation. If classical scholars were asked what kind of exercise is best as a preparation for this art, there can be no doubt that a majority of voices would be in accord for Latin Composition. The exercise of writing Latin, they would say, is the best exercise to form the habit of making good clear logical sentences. In times past a counsel of perfection for those who would form a good English style, and one which has been practised within living memory, was this, to write some Latin prose every day, even if only a sentence or two.

Here I find it necessary to make a distinction. That the composition of Latin prose is an exercise of the very highest value as an educational instrument, seems to be one of the most indubitable facts that experience has established. For opening the mind, and forming it to sympathy with that power of reason which is the dominant faculty of prose, I believe that nothing is equal to it, not Greek, nor English, nor French. But if from this ground we passively and unresistingly slide into the assumption that therefore Latin prose is the best of all models to follow in the formation of sentences and the nexus of discourse, the process is in the highest degree fallacious. As if any one should pretend that those movements of the body which are in highest esteem as gymnastic exercises are therefore the most becoming and the best adapted for the deportment of practical life. The imita-

tion of Latin will beget a certain excellence, and what sort of an excellence that is, may be seen in our noble English classics of the seventeenth century, Hooker, Clarendon, Milton, Jeremy Taylor. We admire them, we praise them, we exult in them —but we have ceased to follow them. We have the benefit of their experience to warn us; we know by them what sort of excellence the imitation of Latin models aspires to.

Another exercise, and one that has been perhaps more usual than any, is that of translation. This was much used in the last, and in the early part of the present century. Gibbon in his Autobiography has informed us how assiduously he wrought at this preparatory exercise. It is certainly excellent as a means of acquiring readiness, as well as copiousness of words and phrases; but it has this serious drawback, that it tends if long persevered in to dull or obliterate the sense of idiom. Gibbon translated much from French; his first published book was written in French; he lived many years in the midst of a French-speaking population; he was so conversant and saturated with French, that he lost all taste of English idiom; and his writing, sensible and reasonable as it is, is of a cold neutral tint, totally devoid of all homeliness and charm of nationality.

In my French and Latin translations I adopted an excellent method, which from my own success, I would recommend to the imitation of students. I chose some classic writer, such as Cicero and Vertot, the most approved for purity and elegance of style. I translated, for instance, an epistle of Cicero into French; and, after throwing it aside till the words and phrases were obliterated from my memory, I re-translated my French into such Latin as I could find; and then compared each sentence of my imperfect version with the ease, the grace, the propriety of the Roman orator. A similar experiment was made on several pages of the Revolutions of Vertot; I turned them into Latin, returned them after a sufficient interval into my own French, and again scrutinized the resemblance or dissimilitude of the copy and the original. By degrees I was less ashamed, by degrees I was more satisfied with myself; and I persevered in the practice of these double translations, which filled several books, till I had acquired the knowledge of both idioms, and the command at least of a correct style. This useful exercise of writing was accompanied and succeeded by the more pleasing occu-

pation of reading the best authors.—*Memoirs of my Life and Writings*, Murray, 1854, p. 47.

All exercises in translation are apt to be vitiated in point of idiom. A translation from French is likely to result not in real English, but merely in disguised French, in French more or less masked under English words. The following example is taken from Père Lacordaire, with the anonymous translation as published in 1869 :—

Vous ne fonderiez donc pas une doctrine, eussiez-vous devant vous mille ans multipliés par mille ans. Que si vous sortez des principes de l'incrédulité, à l'instant même vous retombez en Jésus-Christ, le seul maître possible de quiconque reconnaît une autorité. —*Quarantième Conférence.*

You would not then found a doctrine, even if you had a thousand years multiplied by another thousand before you. If you quit the principles of unbelief, at that very moment you fall back upon Jesus-Christ, the only possible master for whosoever acknowledges an authority.

To produce such English as this out of the French, is a feeble and rather unfruitful exercise. It is little more than practice in the French vocabulary. On the other hand, to translate out of French or any other language into idiomatic English, this is a highly profitable exercise, but it is also far from easy, indeed it is among the greater efforts of mental athletics.

A still better way than either of the foregoing is that of Franklin, who would read a select author and then reproduce that which he had redd, and by comparison with the original discover his own short-coming. This is an admirable practice, and one against which there is perhaps less deduction and drawback than against any other. The only objection that can be made to it is that it may turn out to be but an exercise of the memory and to result in mere imitation.

Of all exercises there is perhaps none so fitted to cultivate freedom and independence in composition, as the exercise of writing verse. Franklin, who wrote excellent English, was indebted to this discipline, and he recommended the study of poetry and the writing of verse as a valuable means for

acquiring a good prose style. It is manifest that the effort to write a few lines of verse puts the composer to a harder task of word-selection than a much larger quantity of prose; the conditions which each word has to satisfy being far more severe in verse than in prose. There is reason to believe that some of the best writers in prose have been (so to say) cheated into this great accomplishment by the delusion of their youth that they were born to be poets. The efforts they made to write poetry ended in failure so far as their boyish ambition was concerned; but they were rewarded in another and not less substantial form by becoming masters of the art of prose composition. Such was the history of the great French prose writer Sainte-Beuve. The same story is told of Plato. It was a good expression of I know not whom, when beautiful prose was called 'poets' prose'—for certainly the prose of our greatest poets is remarkable for its beauty, as any one will admit who passes in review the following names; Spenser, Shakspeare, Cowley, Milton, Dryden, Cowper, Byron, Wordsworth.

But among the exercises to be recommended at the present juncture of time, there is one which is pre-eminent above all others, and that is a diligent study of the prose of the First Culmination. The prose of the second almost equally with that of the third culmination is upon our tongue and at our fingers' ends;—that of the First Culmination has lain so long fallow, that it is practically for us now as if it were a new and virgin soil. As some one said, nothing is new in this world but that which is forgotten. To the student who would give his Style a legitimate freshness, collected by visiting native air, I would say;—cultivate English of the Tenth century, read it daily, and not only read it, but write it also.

'What!'—it may be said—'shall we retrograde nine hundred years, and go back to the tenth century from the nineteenth, in order to learn how to write prose? The prose of Ælfric and of Wulfstan may be very creditable to writers of that time, but is it fit to be erected into a standard and a pattern for our imitation? Have we made no progress in the interval?'

I must parry all such objections by reminding the reader that nothing is farther from my intention than the idea of recommending anything whatever for his imitation. I do not think that in the course of this treatise I have ever let slip any obvious chance of deprecating the whole notion of imitation. I might almost go so far as to say that it is just because the English prose in the Tenth century is too remote for imitation, that I recommend it as an exercise. If I cannot go quite all that length, it is because as a matter of fact there are every here and there a few native touches that might with advantage be revived.

But upon the general question I will say this, that for Diction and Style the linguistic exercises which are best are not those which incline the writer most to imitation. French is more imitable than German, and more worthy to be imitated; but I think German is perhaps a more profitable field for exercise than French. The utility of exercise in Latin prose is so universally acknowledged by educators that nothing can be said to strengthen the reputation of it; yet Latin prose is less worthy of imitation than Greek. The fact is that both Latin and German are at a stage in which structure is more exposed to view than it is in the maturer languages of Greek and French; and this condition makes them more available as a palæstra. So it is with English of the Tenth Century. Much that in modern English is elliptical, or otherwise veiled and hidden, is there seen in all the *naïve* outlines of pristine simplicity.

These are some of the reasons why I venture to think that there is no exercise so fit for the present time, and so worthy to be recommended, as translation, to and fro, between Old English and Modern English. In the tenth century English prose reached a certain pitch of youthful ripeness, characterized by vigour and ingenuity, and exhibiting with great distinctness the elementary types of prose diction. For more than a century and a half this First Culmination of our Prose retained its individuality, and it offers an exercising-ground at once delightful and profitable to the student.

The significance of this advice will become apparent if we consider what element it is that our language is at the present

time most distinctly calling for. By a general consent—a consent which is intimated from time to time by utterances of the best judges, and which may be gathered from the leanings of the best writers—our language is sated with the amount of alien material which it has in latter centuries assimilated, and a natural longing has come over it for a renewal of relations with its own native sources. Signs and tokens of this resumption of natural affection have incidentally met us at divers points of the present treatise. Now it is in the period which I have indicated, namely in the tenth and eleventh centuries, that our language arrived at the highest pitch of maturity which it ever was to reach in its first native and inflected form. This then is the source from which we can most advantageously draw in order to refocillate the most genuine and vernacular element of English Prose.

The English writers whom we readily think of as having displayed in the most pronounced manner this tendency to return to the fountain of our speech are Professor George Stephens of Copenhagen, and Dr. Furnivall. But before their day Dr. Arnold had deliberately chosen this way of improving his English, as may be seen in a letter of his, which is quoted above in the Chapter on Style. And since his time a number of distinguished authors have countenanced and encouraged this movement of restitution, conspicuous among whom is his latest successor in the Chair of Modern History at Oxford, the historian of the Norman Conquest. This restitution, as it appears in his writings, is sometimes attained by simply adhering to the original sources of the historical narrative. In the following quotation *ere drave &c.* signifies that Randolf had previously taken the lead in all public assemblies, that he was famous as an old parliamentary hand.

> The hall was built [Westminster Hall]; the Witan were assembled in it; and, as the one recorded act of the assembly, the King gave the Bishopric of Durham to Randolf [Flambard] his Chaplain, that ere drave all his gemóts over all England.—E. A. Freeman, *William Rufus*. Vol. ii. p. 271.

misdo with other.

They had perhaps already found out that where Henry reigned none might misdo with other, and to misdo with other was to a large part of the Norman nobles the very business of life.—E. A. Freeman, *William Rufus.* Vol. ii. p. 395.

We find in the tenth and eleventh centuries a prose literature of history and of homiletic discourse which will supply admirable material for exercises in English. This discipline I can heartily recommend to the young classical scholar who can already write Latin and is ambitious to achieve the greater accomplishment of writing English. I can recommend it to him, because this discipline will furnish him with that element in which he is most likely to be deficient, and which when it is added to his classical studies will make his education complete. To the student who has not had the benefit of a classical education I can also recommend it, as being precisely the exercise which will lead him to discover within the precincts of English literature the best equivalent for a classical education.

It has been said of an eminent person, whose English writings, now some thirty or forty years old, have become classical, and who still sojourns among us, that in the days of his greatest activity as a leader of men, he always made it a rule to write a piece of Latin, if only a few lines, every day. That was in the time when Latin was still (in some degree) the guiding genius of English composition, but that time has now come to a close. Still, the principle indicated is unchanged; they who wish to write not merely popularly, or fashionably, but effectively and well, should keep themselves in condition by some definite practice and discipline. The writer who does this can afford to work rapidly in his practical work, not troubling himself with that criticism which he has discharged in the hour of drill.

If any one questions whether the present appetite of the language is for words of the true mother tongue, he may easily satisfy himself, supposing he knows how to observe, from the data which come before him in current literature, and even in his morning newspaper. I pause to say a word

on the method of observation. In all discourse, where there is life, we may distinguish between what the writer puts down almost mechanically, and that which is the product of conscious selection. If we can trust ourselves to determine the latter, we have the key to the present tendencies and appetitions of the language. Supposing then, as I said, that my reader knows how to observe, and that he reads nothing but writings of the first order, he may ascertain the present tendencies while he contemplates his daily newspaper. In almost any such paper he may see evidence of the fact that Saxon English is now sought after by those speakers and writers who represent the drift of public opinion.

During the week in which I am writing there have been two conspicuous incidents in contemporaneous history, namely, the installation of The President of the United States, and the abdication of the King of Servia. The President's Address is pitched in a studiously subdued key, and this circumstance is favourable to observation of the kind now in view. I have said that the principle of observation lies in this, that the salient expressions are of recent growth. Some illustrations of this principle are found in sonorous Latin words, which still retain and are likely to retain their use in popular oratory, such as—'diversification' of industry, 'unification' of our people. These I quote merely as examples of a natural connection between saliency and recency.

> I look hopefully to the continuance of the protectionist system and the consequent development of manufactures and mining enterprises in States hitherto wholly agricultural as a potent influence in the perfect unification of our people.

But the principle is oftener exemplified by something purely vernacular. In the paragraph upon foreign policy there is no salient word, but instead of it there is a salient structure, and it is one of a recent type, which has been already treated above—'to willingly forego.'

> It is so manifestly incompatible with our peace and safety that a shorter waterway between our eastern and western seaboards should be dominated by any European Government that we may confidently expect such purpose will not be entertained by any

friendly Power. We shall in the future, as in the past, use every endeavour to maintain and enlarge the friendly relations with all Great Powers, but they will not expect us to look kindly upon any project that would leave us subject to hostile observation or environment. We have not sought to dominate or absorb any weaker neighbour, and have a clear right to expect, therefore, that no European Government will seek to establish colonial dependencies in these independent American States. That which a sense of justice restrains us from seeking, they may be reasonably expected to willingly forego.

But while we may in each paragraph point to some form of expression which exalts its crest above the general context, there is one expression which any reader of the whole Address would select as the most marked and uncommon, and that expression is of the homeliest and most purely native type, it is the Phrasal Adverb *thereunder*. This is the more striking from the boldness of its novelty, in making a new word upon an old English pattern, for it rests more upon analogy than upon precedent.

I have already rejected the suggestion of a special Executive policy for any section. It is the duty of the Executive to administer and enforce in the methods and by the instrumentalities provided by the Constitution the laws enacted by Congress. These laws are general and their administration should be uniform and equal. As a citizen may not elect what laws he will obey, neither may the Executive elect which it will enforce. To obey and execute embraces the Constitution in its entirety and all laws enacted thereunder.

Two days later came the royal abdication, and then the first sentence of the first leader in *The Times*, contained as its salient word *State-craft*—a compound of that native English type which of late years has become so prevalent.

The abdication of King Milan of Servia, though it has been talked about for some time, has at length fallen like a thunderbolt on the State-craft of Europe.

Whereas up to very lately the characteristic word in a sentence, the beacon-word, the word that catches the eye, would have been of a Greek or Latin type, it is now with the

best modern authors, very generally of an English type. Words in *-ness*, *-ed*, *-dom*, *-hood*, *-ship*,[1] often newly made, will be seen by the careful observer to hold this conspicuous place.

discipleship.

Certainly our Lord did not Himself exact from His first followers as an indispensable condition of discipleship any profession of belief in His Godhead.—H. P. Liddon, *Bampton Lectures for* 1866, Lecture I. p. 59.

Thus a word or a phrase which is substantially Latin will admit a renovating modification by a touch of native English. The writer or speaker wants to impart a little freshness to some hackneyed phrase, and this he effects, not as a century ago by a classic novelty, but by something homely as being now the ingredient of most savour. Thus Mr. Illingworth has repeatedly improved the phrase 'both in quantity and quality' by translating one of the substantives into English, thus:—'both in quantity and kind.'[2]

The whims and affectations of current writing are now no longer, as they used to be, drawn mostly from French or classic sources, but quite as often from side currents of English. Here is the kind of thing we often meet in novels of the day. A young married lady fears that she will be the prominent lady of a dinner party, and that the deaf host will lead her to the dining-room; and her mind is thus expressed:

It would be a relief to find that there were some lady of exalteder rank than mine to save me from the fate of bawling at our host all dinner time.

Straws of this kind which indicate the direction of the wind, are continually flitting across the reader's path. In the *Cornhill Magazine* for 1886 (vol. xiii. p. 309) we read:—

The sun had just climbed—I would write clombe an I dared—up the side of the grey barrier &c.

Our foremost authors in their innovations are mostly found to draw upon the native source and revive the sound of some

[1] Examples are given in my *English Philology*, §§ 321, 323, 396.

[2] *Sermons in a College Chapel* (1881), p. 80.

half-forgotten note. The use of the prefix *un-* had been remodeled by classic influence. In its native character it not only modified adjectives as *unholy*, *unwise*, but also substantives, as it still does in German, e.g. ungewitter bad weather, unkraut weed. This valuable faculty we seemed to have irrevocably lost. For the native *un-* was taken in tow by the Latin *in-* and became so obsequious as to be entirely ruled by the law of the Classic prefix, and so we nearly lost the use of *un-* as a modifier of substantives. This has, however, recently been recovered by some of our best writers;—Carlyle has *unwisdom*, Tennyson contrasts faith with *unfaith*. This may seem a small matter, but it is in reality nothing less than a faculty kept from lapsing into disuse. A great organ may have many thousand pipes, and to an indifferent observer one more or less may seem hardly worth mention, but he who can play upon the instrument will know how each several loss entails its corresponding disability.

In the age which built up the Second Culmination, the materials for English prose are to be found in the poets, and more especially in Chaucer. An educational exercise which should consist in reading, as it were, verse and verse in the *Canterbury Tales* would do wonders to renew and reinvigorate English prose. Or if this be not deemed fitted for children, it might be arranged by grown persons who were desirous of mutual improvement.[1] But the great contribution of this age is in the Romanic words which we then acquired. The aspiring writer should from time to time peruse the Thousand Romanic words which I have collected in the historic chapter of the Second Culmination. For these words constitute the second line of our Vocabulary; often they are substitutes for older words which have disappeared, and in that case they have come to the front themselves; often they constitute useful duplicates with older words still retained; often again, they are elder duplicates to newer words, and the selection of one or the other for present use is practically one of the most frequent

[1] It would require a special edition for this purpose; I prepared one some years ago, but it was declined by the publisher to whom I offered it, and I had not leisure to explore the market further.

exercises of choice of expression. I have repeatedly praised the quality of the current ephemeral prose, but there is one caution to be added to this eulogy. It is that the current prose declines too much towards the newest words, and if a writer depends on such reading alone, he will gradually let slip some of the noblest parts of the English vocabulary.

The vast extent of our vocabulary makes selection necessary. Lexicographers now talk of our word-store in figures that amount to hundreds of thousands, and in so vast an ocean the writer wants something to serve him as chart and compass. It is a guiding fact that the most useful words are of a comparatively limited number, and it is well to be able to verify these and to be acquainted with them in their historical relations. This is the great service which I count on having done for the reader in the Trilogies, and in my tabulation of the Thousand Romanic words. Whoever will contemplate the vast aggregation of the English vocabulary, as it is set before us in the brilliant description of Dr. Murray, may appreciate the benefit of an inner circle of 'Common Words,' a nucleus in which he may feel at home. The following quotation will, I hope, lead many readers, to whom it may be new, to reperuse it in its original page, for in its native seat it is accompanied with a diagram which enhances by pictorial aid its already graphic force.

> The Vocabulary of a widely-diffused and highly-cultivated living language is not a fixed quantity circumscribed by definite limits. That vast aggregate of words and phrases which constitutes the Vocabulary of English-speaking men presents, to the mind that endeavours to grasp it as a definite whole, the aspect of one of those nebulous masses familiar to the astronomer, in which a clear and unmistakable nucleus shades off on all sides, through zones of decreasing brightness, to a dim marginal film that seems to end nowhere, but to lose itself imperceptibly in the surrounding darkness. In its constitution it may be compared to one of those natural groups of the zoologist or botanist, wherein typical species, forming the characteristic nucleus of the order, are linked on every side to other species, in which the typical character is less and less distinctly apparent, till it fades away in an outer fringe of aberrant forms, which merge imperceptibly in various surrounding orders, and whose own position is ambiguous and uncertain. For the con-

venience of classification, the naturalist may draw the line, which bounds a class or order, outside or inside of a particular form; but Nature has drawn it nowhere. So the English Vocabulary contains a nucleus or central mass of many thousand words whose 'Anglicity' is unquestioned; some of them only literary, some of them only colloquial, the great majority at once literary and colloquial—they are the *Common Words* of the language. But they are linked on every side with other words which are less and less entitled to this appellation, and which pertain ever more and more distinctly to the domain of local dialect, of the slang and cant of 'sets' and classes, of the peculiar technicalities of trades and processes, of the scientific terminology common to all civilized nations, of the actual languages of other lands and peoples. And there is absolutely no defining line in any direction: the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre, but no discernible circumference.—*A New English Dictionary* (Clarendon Press), Part i., p. vii.

The exercise which is most in vogue, being usual school-exercise, is Essay-writing. This is useful as an occasional exercise;—whether or no it is a little overdone in the drill of competitive studies, I do not know. Mr. John Morley, in an Address to students 'On the Study of Literature,' seems to think that this may be the case.

I venture with all respect to those who are teachers of literature, to doubt the excellence and utility of the practice of over-much essay-writing and composition. I have very little faith in rules of style, though I have an unbounded faith in the virtue of cultivating direct and precise expression. But you must carry on the operation inside the mind, and not merely by practising literary deportment on paper. It is not everybody who can command the mighty rhythm of the greatest masters of human speech. But every one can make reasonably sure that he knows what he means, and whether he has found the right word. These are internal operations, and are not forwarded by writing for writing's sake. I am strong for attention to expression, if that attention be exercised in the right way. It has been said a million times that the foundation of right expression in speech or writing is sincerity. It is as true now as it has ever been. Right expression is a part of character. As somebody has said, by learning to speak with precision you learn to think with correctness; and firm and vigorous speech lies through the cultivation of high and noble sentiments. I think, as far as my observation has gone, that men will do better for reaching precision by studying

carefully and with an open mind and a vigilant eye the great models of writing, than by excessive practice of writing on their own account.

In *The Art of Authorship*, a compilation in which authors are induced to speak for themselves, Mark Twain disavows conscious methods of preparation.[1] He gives his evidence on short and long sentences.

'Your inquiry has set me thinking,' he writes, 'but, so far, my thought fails to materialise. I mean that upon consideration, I am not sure that I have methods in composition. I do suppose I have—I suppose I must have—but they somehow refuse to take shape in my mind; their details refuse to separate and submit to classification and description; they remain a jumble—visible, like the fragments of glass when you look in at the wrong end of a kaleidoscope, but still a jumble. If I could turn the whole thing around and look in at the other end, why then the figures would flash into form out of the chaos, and I shouldn't have any more trouble. . . .

. . . . 'However, let us try guessing. Let us guess that whenever we read a sentence and like it, we unconsciously store it away in our model-chamber; and it goes with the myriad of its fellows to the building, brick by brick, of the eventual edifice which we call our style. And let us guess that whenever we run across other forms—bricks—whose colour, or some other defect, offends us, we unconsciously reject these, and so one never finds them in our edifice. If I have subjected myself to any training processes, and no doubt I have, it must have been in this unconscious or half-conscious fashion. I think it unlikely that deliberate and consciously methodical training is usual with the craft. I think it likely that the training most in use is of this unconscious sort, and is guided and governed and made by-and-by unconsciously systematic, by an automatically-working taste—a taste which selects and rejects without asking you for any help, and patiently and steadily improves without troubling you to approve or applaud. Yes, and likely enough when the structure is at last pretty well up, and attracts attention, *you* feel complimented, whereas you didn't build it, and didn't even consciously superintend. Yes; one notices, for instance, that long, involved sentences confuse him, and that he is obliged to re-read them to get the sense. Unconsciously, then, he rejects that brick. Unconsciously he accustoms himself to writing short sentences as a rule. At times he may indulge himself with

[1] The domestic name of the American humourist is Samuel Langhorne Clemens.

a long one, but he will make sure that there are no folds in it, no vaguenesses, no parenthetical interruptions of its view as a whole; when he is done with it, it won't be a sea-serpent, with half of its arches under the water, it will be a torch-light procession.'

The moral of this reasoning points to the value of select reading. However wide may be the divergences of theory as to the elementary processes of good writing, there is one about which no difference of opinion has ever existed, and that is the value and the necessity of habitual reading in authors carefully chosen.

There is no exercise or combination of exercises that will enable the writer to dispense with the constant and systematic reading of the best authors. He must read authors old and new; he must read with selection, and he must read with a judgment and an observation in which not the eye only and the mind have their part, but the ear also. He should husband his powers, and read only so long as his faculties are active, while his appetite is keen not only for the reception of the matter but also for appreciation of the manner; and he should not read when he is unfit for attention and observation. Discipline of reading has a good deal to do with fashion of writing.

He should be jealous over himself to read little of inferior quality. Let him read Chaucer and Spenser and Shakspeare; Hooker, Clarendon, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Defoe, Bunyan, Addison. I will not speak of the English Bible and Common Prayer Book in such a manner as to range them in the list of models;—but undoubtedly great is the advantage of a familiar acquaintance with these. But if all the writings which are models, models I mean in the highest sense of the word, models from which the spirit of genuine true and wholesome diction is to be imbibed, (not models of mannerism of which the trick or fashion is to be caught), I have no hesitation in saying that there is one author unapproachably and incomparably the best, and that is Samuel Johnson. This is not obvious at the first glance; it takes almost a lifetime to know it, and we cannot take these things upon trust; I had heard it said in my youth and could not realize it; only by very slow and gradual attraction have I been drawn to this deliberate conclusion.

Again I say, read the best authors. Read Macaulay, for though Matthew Arnold counts him among the Philistines, he certainly has some of the most solid qualities of a good writer. Not only his skill in arranging and marshalling his materials, but the choice of his words, and the variety of his sentences, and above all the grouping and melodious run of his paragraphs; —in this latter faculty he seems to me *facilè princeps* of all modern English writers. It is to his mastery of the form of the paragraph that I am disposed to trace his wide popularity, and that fascination with which many readers, and I for one, seem most delightfully spellbound when they are reading him.

Read the best authors. Read Ruskin, for his marvellous literary faculty, his true delineation of the form of his thought, which an admiring reader may well aspire to catch something of, and which may indeed be caught in some degree, according to the reader's capacity and power of attention.

About the choice of reading, there is another very important remark to be made. The writer of English Prose should be conversant with the English poets. This may sound strange —may sound at variance with what has been insisted upon above, that prose diction must not be confused with poetic; —but the reason for this advice is deeper than may at first view appear. When we deprecate poetic diction, we are thinking of the decoration of poetry, of the superficial part, the part of greatest prominence, but not the most essential. There is, underlying the decorative part, a substratum of an earlier age of the language, a legacy from Saxon and mediæval times, and this, though little noticed, is of the essence of English poetry. In some poets it is more observable than in others; it is very manifest in Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser. It is less apparent in Milton, but nevertheless it is there; and this was what Mr. John Bright took from his constant reading of Milton: he extracted the pure honey of English, and left the classic flowers behind. Particularly I would recommend those who desire to lead the less educated people, to be readers of poetry. The grandiloquence of prose is more of a barrier than that of poetry between minds of different educational grades. Perhaps this will be readily admitted, and if so, then the

advice above, that poetic reading conveys a spirit of Early English into the mind, may perhaps be allowed to enter along with it.

It is only by familiarity with good authors that our discourse can get winged with a certain indescribable movement of elevated graceful and triumphant flight. There is after all a something which defies analysis. We have seen above that there are many parts and elements in the Art of Writing English. But all is not analyzable. There is a something which we can neither dissect nor define nor describe. And it is this something which makes all the difference. How is it else that you may read a paragraph, and feel an influence, and look back over the words to see wherein it consists, and can perceive no cause? Have you never experienced this, O reader? If not, my rhetoric is done, I have no further illustration to offer. But if you have, then I say, how is it that of this unaccountable something which attracts and persuades there is a rich and constant experience when reading in Dr. Johnson but not in Gibbon; in Cardinal Newman more and in Carlyle less? Is it that a whole man is speaking to us in the one case, and only a segment of human nature in the other? Is it ἦθος; is the difference a moral one? Is it the old story, *pectus facit predicatorem*? Of the fact there is no doubt; there are witnesses to be found if we seek them.[1]

The general effect of our whole study is this;—that we have in the vocabulary and the phraseology and the written examples of the English language a rich and inviting display of materials fit and prepared for the artist and calculated to awaken the genius of Art. In former ages the language was less prepared to receive and convey impressions from the mind, and those who wrought in it had more labour with less result than the diligent writer may hope to attain now. The quality and condition of the material is of the greatest importance to him who is to work in it.

Let Phidias have rude and obstinate stuff to carve, though his art do that it should, his work will lack that beauty which otherwise in fitter matter it might have had. He that striketh an instrument

[1] See a remarkable passage by Dr. Pusey, in his *University Sermons*, 1859–1872; Sermon I.; which I have quoted in my *English Philology*, § 659.

with skill may cause notwithstanding a very unpleasant sound, if the string whereon he striketh chance to be uncapable of harmony. —R. Hooker, *Of the Laws* I. iii. 3.

But while it is necessary to read the best authors and observe very closely their art of expression, yet the writer must be careful to do this in such a manner as to preserve his own independence and individuality. He must not become a mere imitator. Franklin's plan of reproducing passages from memory, and afterwards correcting them by the original is good up to a certain point, but should be discontinued as soon as the student perceives that it is cultivating in him the merely reproductive and memorizing faculty. We sometimes see an architect who has addicted himself with fondness to the thirteenth or fourteenth century till he has erected the productions of that time into such absolute models, that he has bound himself captive in the trammels of an overweening admiration, and is unable to break through or strike out a line of his own. True Art is essentially limitless;—no mere imitator, whatever the excellence of his models, can fulfil the office of the Artist. Even in those Arts which are naturally the most imitative of all, the Arts of Painting and Sculpture, if the work is merely a copy of Nature itself, it is without artistic merit. It is only through the contribution of some original life which the artist's mind gives to the representation that it attains the quality of a work of Art.

And if this is so in Arts, of which the objects are sensible and the materials physical, how much more in that Art where the object to be represented is more especially the invisible thought, and the materials to be employed have a greater range of flexibility than those at the command of any other Art whatsoever.

In conclusion I recur to my apology for so long a treatise upon what may appear a matter of small moment and wholly unworthy of an effort at systematic exposition. My defence is that perhaps it is not so very small a matter, whether our habits of expression in writing are or are not sedulously cultivated.

Some one may say that it is cultivation enough if a man can write grammatically. But the training which guarantees

a writer against grammatical solecisms has no quality in it which gives fullness of expression to thought, or rather perhaps I ought to say which gives a rich and copious habit of thought clothed in full and adequate expression. In cultivating habits of just and appropriate utterance, are we cultivating only a rhetorical faculty, or are we not rather cultivating the power of thought itself? There have been philosophers to assert that language and thought are inseparable from one another, and Prof. Max Müller has lately reproduced this argument in a new and expanded form.[1] The current notion probably is, that we think first and then look for words to clothe our thought. This way of speaking is so familiar that it constitutes in itself an evidence of the prevalent opinion. I will quote a passage in which this opinion is explicitly and ably asserted, a passage which will suffice to show that the common notion, however mistaken it may be, is not to be flung aside as if it were the product of mere unreflecting ignorance.

> There is surely a state of mind real and frequent, in which thought seems in a process of formation—using instruments of its own inexplicable and unutterable—of which language is only the subsequent translation—a state too dim indeed for speculation, but one exhibited equally in the earliest emotions of the infant's spirit and in the loftiest meditations of the wise.—F. Myers, *Catholic Thoughts on the Bible*, ix.

On the other hand, Mr. Max Müller quotes Mansel saying that 'language is inseparable from thought, that man must think by symbols, and, as a matter of fact, thinks by language.' He quotes other testimonies to the same effect, but he claims science and not authority as the footing of his contention. He maintains and reiterates with great variety of evidence and illustration, that language is thought and thought is language; that thought is impossible without language or some other kind of embodiment which for the argument is equivalent to language; that we think with our words as we see with our eyes, and that Language is the true organ of the mind; that the historical development of the human mind must be studied

[1] *The Science of Thought*, by F. Max Müller, 1887.

in the history of Language, and that Language is the first if not the only subject with which the philosopher has to deal.

Carlyle seems to differ rather in his peculiar way of statement than in the essentials of the discussion.

> Language is called the Garment of Thought: however, it should rather be, Language is the Flesh-Garment, the Body, of Thought.
>
> I said that Imagination wove this Flesh-Garment; and does not she?
>
> Metaphors are her stuff: examine Language; what, if you except some few primitive elements (of natural sound), what is it all but Metaphors, recognized as such, or no longer recognized; still fluid, and florid, or now solid-grown and colourless?
>
> If those same primitive elements are the osseous fixtures in the Flesh-Garment, Language,—then are Metaphors its muscles and tissues and living integuments.
>
> An unmetaphorical style you shall in vain seek for: is not your very "*Attention*" a "*Stretching-to*"? The difference lies here: some styles are lean, adust, wiry, the muscle itself seems osseous: some are even quite pallid, hunger-bitten and dead-looking: while others again glow in the flush of health and vigorous self-growth, sometimes (as in my own case) not without an apoplectic tendency. —T. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* (ed. 1871), pp. 49, 50.

The Duke of Argyll will not admit the contention of the Professor in its full extent, but he allows that the two are inseparable for all purposes connected with the growth of mankind in knowledge.[1]

> Thought and language are inseparable for all purposes connected with the communion of thought from one mind to another. And these purposes include all conversation and all literature. That is to say, they are inseparable for all purposes of life, including the whole growth of mankind in knowledge.

This whole discussion has produced no better or safer formula, and none more adaptable to our present drift, than that of Prof. Green, who, in his essay on 'Faith,' said: 'Thought first becomes definite in language.' This is a sentence that will probably conciliate the suffrages of many who would be shy of admitting that thought without words

[1] *Contemporary Review*, Dec. 1888. 'Identity of Thought and anguage

is impossible. And it requires us to admit the important reflection, that language is not merely the vehicle of our thoughts, but even a necessary instrument and condition of their development within the mind. How then can it be superfluous to do our utmost to improve such an instrument? I assume that to think clearly and distinctly is what every man desires as being necessary to a sound discrimination of judgment; and if so, the culture of appropriate language is to be recommended as conducing to so desirable an end. And if such care in the habitual use of written language were to become general, the language itself would be placed in a career of accelerated improvement, it would become a more effective medium for the education of the young, and the benefit thus instituted would be progressive from generation to generation.

Another last word. It must not be supposed that a man can write well through a knowledge of rules. As well might one expect to be able to perform upon the organ by dint of observing his music-master's directions. The art of the organist can only be acquired with a delicate sympathetic relation between the performer and his instrument. The English Language is an instrument, a musical instrument; it is more complex, various, and subtle than the grandest organ; it cannot be made to give forth its secret powers but by dint of an intimate acquaintance with it, and the man who has made that acquaintance will have little need to think much more about the rules. But how to make that acquaintance? Ah, yes, how to make it! As in all affectionate relations, you must partly find the way out for yourself, and your best friend cannot do much more than give you a hint or two. But that much we may do. I would say then:— Always have a book in reading, a well-chosen book, written by a good and approved author. And you must enjoy your reading, this is essential; therefore select a book that you can enjoy. If a book is well recommended to you, try it, and read it continuously at stated intervals and times, not hastily rejecting it even though you may not like it at first; but firmly rejecting it if after fair trial you cannot delight in it. Here are two opposite considerations, you must not

yield to a light distaste, and you must not beyond a certain mark constrain yourself to read. The book which you cannot enjoy is not the book for you. We are not now talking about the acquisition of knowledge. He that is to get learning must read by task-work, that is quite certain; but if we desire to cultivate an æsthetic taste, we must read with pleasure. Enjoyment is essential to profit. And let the enjoyment be only of such a sort as you can approve of with heart and conscience at every hour of the day and night. If you read such books as stimulate emotions wastefully, you throw your mind into disorder, and you can get no good for the noblest and most universal of the arts while you are disordered in the foundations of your soul. For if your Speech is an instrument beyond the organ, your mind is also a musical instrument still nobler than your Speech, and it is only when its notes and chords are in a state of sanity, that you can make good music upon the great human instrument of Language.

Prose writing has been called the characteristic Art of the nineteenth century. This remark faces only backward and not forward at all. The Art of Prose writing is more characteristic of the nineteenth century than it was of the eighteenth, even as it was more characteristic of the eighteenth than it was of the seventeenth, and so on backward; and we may safely anticipate that it will be more characteristic of the twentieth century than of the nineteenth or of any before it.

The old rivalry between Poetry and Prose is extinct. The man who now writes poetry which is redd, is one in millions. Those who write prose which is redd, are a multitude increasing every day. This does not however threaten the cessation of Poetry. The vitality of Poetry was never better attested than in the present day, when in spite of relative neglect there is no falling off in the supply of poetical writings, nor in their quality either. The Art of Poetry will always be pursued, if only for the gratification of a natural desire. There is in all men a passion for artistic production, or at least the germ of it. The making of poetry gratifies that passion. The same passion urges people who have leisure to make pictures, or carve in wood, or labour at music, even when they have little aim beyond their own amusement, even when there is little

demand for their productions. The progress of culture tends to increase the number of those who exercise an Art, but it does not enlarge the sphere of amateur influence. The development of public taste exalts the professional and displaces the amateur. As for the *rôle* of poet, it is more than ever removed from common access, and that too at a time when there are more writers of excellent verse than there ever were before. Our recognized poets are now poets by profession, men who make poetry the business of their life.

Contrasted with all this we see in Prose an Art from which no aspirant is excluded, to which rather all men in the degree of their intercourse with others are attracted and invited; an Art that creates no profession apart, but identifies itself with every man's business or taste or pursuit; an Art which admits every gradation of culture, and in its highest grade excludes ostentation, because (beyond all other Arts) it verifies the crowning quality of Art, hiding its own perfection in the great simplicity of Nature.

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